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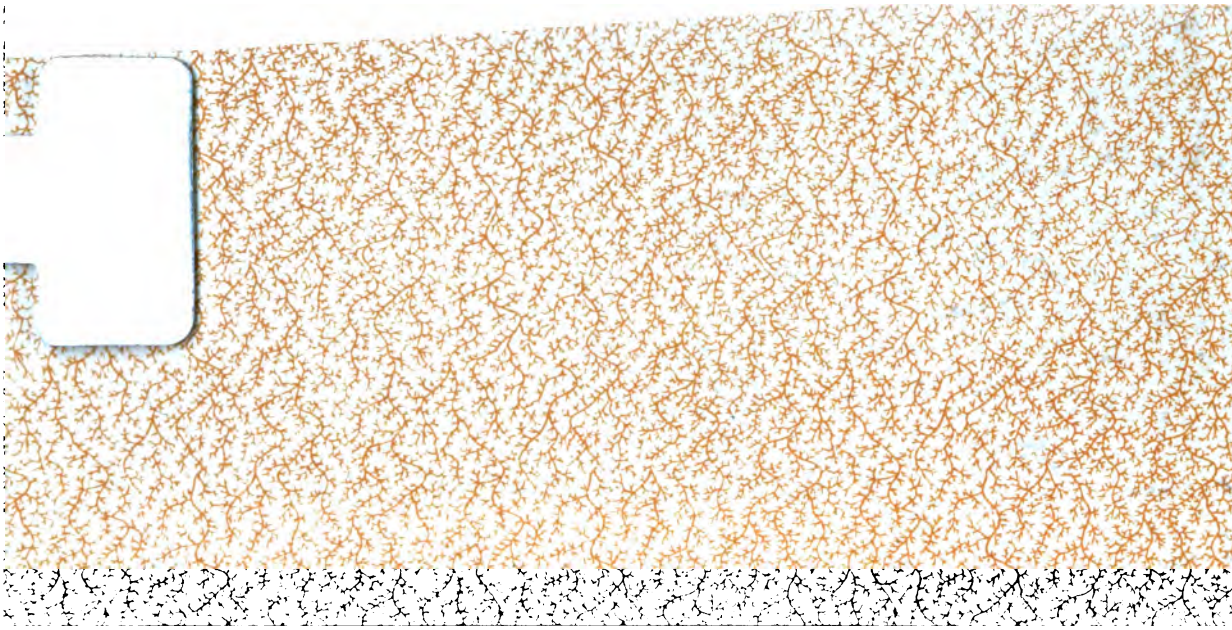

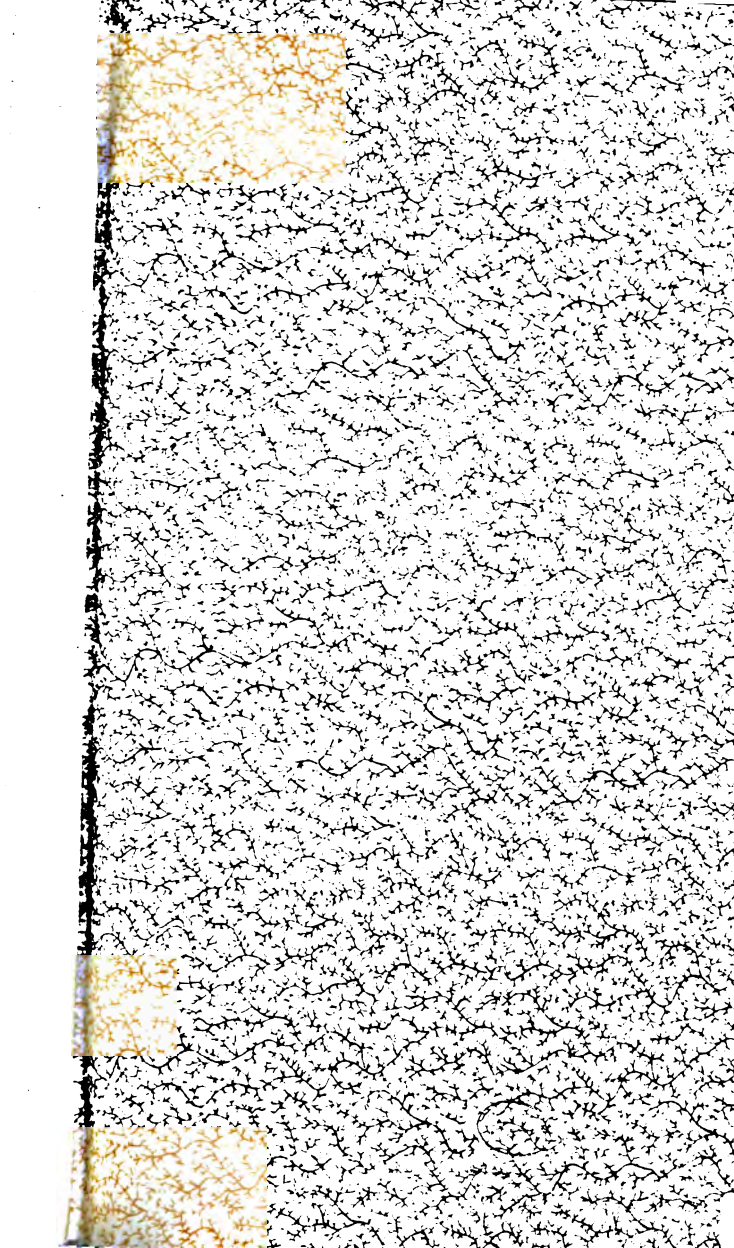

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THE

THEATRE

OF

EDUCATION.

THE

THEATRE

OF

EDUCATION.

A

NEW TRANSLATION

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

MADAME LA MARQUISE DE SILLERY,

LATE

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE GENLIS.

TOR LIBRARY
NEW-YORK

VOL. IV.

Leçon commence, exemple achève.
La Motte, Fable de l'Aigle et de l'Aiglon.

LONDON:

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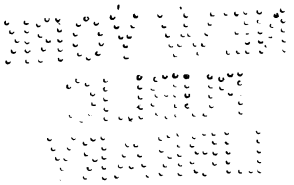

PREFACE.

MANY PERSONS have written on the ſubject of education; but, hitherto, their labours have been wholly confined to the ſervice of one claſs of people.

THOUGH general principles of virtue and morality are ſuitable, no doubt, to all ranks of life, ſtill, each ſhould likewiſe have its particular precepts; and every individual ought to be ambitious of acquiring thoſe qualities which may render him eminent in his ſtation.

THIS volume is entirely deſigned for the education of children belonging to ſhop-keepers and mechanicks; and even thoſe perſons who are placed in a ſtill more humble claſs, may derive

beneficial leſſons from it. Ladies' women and ſhop-girls will here find a minute detail of their reſpective obligations and duties; they will here ſee in action a truth which may, it is hoped, make an impreſſion on them; namely, that nothing enſures ſucceſs ſo much as honeſty, and that ſelf-intereſt, well underſtood, directs us to purſue the very plan of conduct which virtue preſcribes and renders amiable.

AN honeſt man has power to dignify that rank of life, whatſoever it may be, in which he is placed by Providence; let him learn its duties, let him fulfil them; and, in the eyes of reaſon, he will be conſidered as an object worthy of regard, eſteem, and veneration.

THE Author has ſpared no pains in order to acquire an accurate knowledge of that claſs of citizens to whom this volume is offered; and by ſtudying them, ſhe is only become doubly anxious to dedicate a work to their ſervice. Piety, purity of manners, and the moſt affecting family concord, may generally be found in this ſphere of life; and the author can add with truth, that the virtuous characters in theſe little Dramas are not chimerical, but ſuch as really exiſt; nor are they repreſented here with the ſmalleſt exaggeration.

MAY

MAY this volume be read only by thoſe valuable citizens for whoſe uſe it was written! may it employ the leiſure moments of thoſe good mothers who love their children! may it be found, not in a ſpacious library, but on an humble counter! and it will then meet with that reception, that ſucceſs, which the Author deſires; for then her only end will be accompliſhed!

THE

FESTIVAL OF SALENCY;

OR,

The ELECTION of a QUEEN of the ROSE;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE AUTHOR imagines that ſome particulars relative to Salency, and the reſpectable inſtitution of the Feſtival of the Roſe, will be read with pleaſure; and it is impoſſible to gratify the reader's curioſity on this ſubject in a more intereſting manner, than by quoting a memorial, written in favour of the Feſtival. This memorial appeared in the year 1774, ſigned by Me. TARGET, Advocate, and Me. TARGET, Attorney: and the following is a tranſcript of thoſe parts which relate to the Feſtival, and to the people of Salency.

"THERE ſtill remains one place on earth where ſimple genuine virtue receives ſome publick honours: this place, far diſtant from the poliſh and the luxury of cities, is a village in Picardy, where an affecting ceremony, which draws tears from the

the beholders, a ſacred rite, auguſt from its venerable antiquity and ſalutary influence, has been preſerved through twelve revolving ages. In this place, the ſimple ſplendor of thoſe flowers which annually crown the brow of innocence, is at once its reward, encouragement, and emblem. Though the youthful breaſt is, even here, a prey to ambition, ſtill, it is a gentle ambition, whoſe utmoſt aim is a Chaplet of Roſes. The preparations for a publick deciſion, the pomp of the Feſtival, the crowds of people whom it draws together, and the univerſal attention paid to that modeſty which by its bluſhes does honour to itſelf; the ſimplicity of the reward (an emblem of thoſe virtues by which it is obtained) the tender friendſhip of the rival candidates, who, while heightening the triumph of their Queen, conceal within their worthy boſoms the timid hope of reigning at a future period; all theſe concurring circumſtances give to this ſingular ſpectacle an awful and becoming pomp, which fills every heart with palpitations, makes every eye ſparkle with tears truly luxurious, and converts wiſdom into enthuſiaſm. In this place an unblemiſhed character is not the only thing needful; here, proofs are demanded of a certain nobility, a nobility which does not ſpring from rank and ſtation, but from worth and innocence; a nobility, inſtances of which are required in ſeveral generations, both on the father's and the mother's ſide; therefore, the attainment of one Chaplet, virtually crowns a whole family: the triumph of one is the glory of all; and the gray-headed old man who tenderly weeps over the conqueſt gained by his grand-daughter, in fact receives, while ſtanding at her ſide, the reward of ſixty years ſpent in a courſe of virtue.

By these means, the emulation for a common honour becomes general; and every individual of a family dreads being the cause of excluding a daughter or a sister from the throne, by committing an indelicate action. The Rose, promised to the most prudent, expected with emotion, and conferred with justice, establishes goodness, rectitude, and morality, in every house; and attaches the best of people to the most peaceful of abodes.

Example, powerful example, operates even at a distance, and makes the seeds of virtue vegetate and blossom; so that a traveller who approaches this district, perceives, before he enters it, that he is not far from Salency. In the course of so many revolving ages, the Salencians have seen every thing around them change; they alone will transmit to their children the pure inheritance which their fathers left them, namely, an institution, noble from its simplicity, and potent under an appearance of weakness: such is the almost unknown influence of honorary distinctions, such the power of that easy spring by which all men may be governed: sow honour, and you will reap virtue.

If we consider the antiquity of this Festival, we shall find it the most ancient ceremony existing; if we attend to its object, perhaps it is the only institution dedicated to genuine virtue; therefore, allowing virtue to be the most useful and estimable good mankind can possess, this establishment, by which it is encouraged, is a publick benefit, a national advantage, which belongs to France—

Ac-

ACCORDING to a tradition, handed down from age to age, Saint Médard, who was born at Salency (the proprietor, rather than the lord of that district, for no fiefs then exiſted) was the inſtitutor of this charming Feſtival, which has made virtue flouriſh for ſo many centuries. He enjoyed the ſweet delight of reaping the fruits of his wiſdom; and his family was honoured with the prize which he himſelf had inſtituted: his ſiſter obtained the Chaplet of Roſes—

THIS affecting and valuable Feſtival has been celebrated from the fifth century to the preſent hour; and to that the Salencians are indebted for their purity of manners, which, from time immemorial, has ſubſiſted without the ſlighteſt ſtain; to that they owe their peace, happineſs, and glory.

THIS Roſe is the portion, and frequently the only portion, brought by virtue; this Roſe forms the pleaſing, the delightful tie of a happy marriage. It is anxiouſly ſought for even by wealth, who comes with reſpect to receive it from the hand of honourable indigence. An antiquity of twelve hundred years, and an antiquity, from which ſuch brilliant advantages reſult, is the faireſt title in the world.

AN important moment for this Feſtival was that in which the Marquis de Gordes, Captain of the guards to Louis the thirteenth, was ſent, on the part of his maſter, from the caſtle of Varennes to Salency, and commanded to preſent the Queen with a blue ribband and a ſilver ring. Since that honourable æra, a blue ribband with flowing ends

has encircled the Crown of Roſes, a ring has been faſtened to it, and the damſels who attend upon the Queen have worn a blue ribband, in the manner of a ſcarf, over their white garments—

In the year 1766, M. de Morfontaine ſettled an annual penſion of five pounds on the perſon who was at that time Queen, to be enjoyed by her during life, and afterwards appropriated to the uſe of each ſucceeding Queen for one year. This noble generoſity cannot be rewarded but by publick homage; honour alone is its proper recompence—

Some days before the Feſtival of Saint Médard, the inhabitants of Salency aſſemble in the preſence of the magiſtrates, that this worthy company may deliberate upon the important buſineſs of a choice enforced only by equity. They are acquainted with all the virtues of the perſon whom they are to crown; they know all the domeſtick hiſtory of their peaceful village; they have not, nor can they have any aim but juſtice. Reſpect and enthuſiaſm for the memory of the holy inſtitutor, and for the excellence of the inſtitution, are ſtill in full force among them. They nominate three girls, three worthy Salencians, the three worthieſt maidens of the moſt reſpectable families—

The names of the parties nominated are immediately carried to the Lord of Salency, or to the perſon whom he appoints as his repreſentative; and the Lord, obliged to chooſe one of the three, but at liberty to ſelect which he pleaſes, proclaims the Queen for the year—

A WEEK before the ceremony, the name of the triumphant candidate is announced in a ſermon—

THE important day arrives; it is always the eighth of June.

THE Lord has a right to claim the honour of leading the Queen to the place appointed for her coronation. On this great day ſhe is elevated above all thoſe who ſurround her, and her elevation is of a kind which has nothing in common with rank. The Lord enjoys the glorious privilege of taking virtue from the cottage to lead her in triumph.—Reſting either on his arm, or on that of his repreſentative, the Queen iſſues from her humble dwelling, eſcorted by twelve damſels, clothed in white garments adorned with blue rib-bands, and an equal number of youths, who wear her badges; and being preceeded by drums and other muſical inſtruments, the ſignals of her outſet, ſhe paſſes through the ſtreets of Salency, which are lined with ſpectators, whom this Feſtival draws together from four leagues diſtance. The publick gaze and applaud her, the mothers weep for joy; while the old men feel new ſupplies of vigour, and follow their beloved Queen, comparing her with thoſe whom they ſaw in their youth. The Salencians glory in the virtues of the Queen they elect; ſhe is one of them, ſhe belongs to them, reigns by their free choice, reigns alone, and is the only object of their attention—

THE Queen goes to the church, and is ſtationed in the midſt of the congregation, a place always

appointed for her, because no other would be honourable: in her presence there is no distinction of persons; rank disappears at the approach of virtue. A hassock, standing in the center of the choir, and open to the view of the whole church, is prepared for her reception; her retinue arrange themselves on either side; she is the only object of the day; every eye remains fixed upon her, and her triumph continues.

After vespers, the procession moves again: the clergy lead the way; the Lord receives the hand of the Queen, who is attended by her retinue; the spectators follow and line the streets, each row being faced by the inhabitants under arms. The Queen is greeted with fresh acclamations and fresh homage, till she arrives at Saint Médard's chapel, the doors of which, must, no doubt, be left open. The good Salencians do not forsake their Queen at the moment when she is going to receive the reward of virtue; indeed, this is the period when it is most pleasing to see her, and most honourable for her to be seen.

The officiating priest blesses the Chaplet of Roses and its accompanying ornaments; after which he turns to the congregation, and pronounces a discourse on the design of the Festival. How awfully serious, how truly august, do those words sound which issue from the lips of the pastor, who, at such a moment, celebrates prudence! In his hand he holds the Crown, while virtue waits at his feet to receive it: every spectator is affected, every eye moistened, and every heart already struck with conviction: this is the moment for lasting impressions, and at this moment he crowns the Queen.

Then

THEN follows a *Te Deum*, during which the proceſſion moves again.

THE head, now ornamented with a crown, the Queen returns the way ſhe came, accompanied by all thoſe who attended her coronation; ſtill receiving new honours till ſhe enters the church, and reſumes her former ſtation in the middle of the choir, where ſhe hears the remaining part of the ſervice.

NEW homage awaits her; for, after leaving the church, ſhe is conducted to a particular ſpot of ground, where triumphant innocence finds expecting vaſſals ready to preſent her with their gifts; gifts, ſimple in themſelves, but whoſe very ſingularity proves the cuſtom to be ancient: theſe gifts are a noſegay of flowers, an arrow, two balls, &c. &c.

FROM this ſpot ſhe is conducted back, and, with the ſame parade, reſtored to her relations, and accompanied to her own dwelling, where, if ſhe thinks fit, ſhe offers her conductor and retinue a rural repaſt—

THIS Feſtival is of a ſingular kind, without any model whatſoever: it is meant to encourage prudence, by rewarding it with publick honours; honours, which ought to be unlimited. Where virtue reigns, no rivalry exiſts; and thoſe perſons who do not wave all diſtinction of rank in her preſence, are not aware of what is due to her triumph.

THE grand characteriſtick of this Feſtival is, that all its ſeveral parts have a reference to the Queen;

Queen; that every thing is eclipſed by her; that her ſplendor is direct, and not reflected; that her glory borrows no luſtre from rank; that ſhe wants no auxiliary aid to make her great and reſpectable; in ſhort, that this Feſtival is the type of reſplendent virtue, in whoſe preſence every other object fades away.—

THE paſtor * is as reſpectable as the flock is pure; and by ſhewing himſelf the protector of a Feſtival which has preſerved morality from the general contagion, he acts the only part becoming his character. How delightful is the office of governing men who are upright, artleſs, and induſtrious, happy in their mediocrity, and peaceable in their dealings with each other! men, whoſe annals do not furniſh an inſtance of *one perſon* who was ever called before the bar of juſtice; men, whoſe purity has not been ſtained by a ſingle meanneſs, polluted by a ſingle crime, or contaminated by one decree againſt them; men, whoſe lowly dwellings exhibit, in the midſt of active indigence, the virtues of both ſexes united for the common good."

* M. Sauvel, Prior of Salency, who, from his morals, virtues, and truly paternal love for his pariſhioners, is highly deſerving of this encomium.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

THE LORD of Salency.

THE PRIOR of Salency.

MONICA, *an old country-woman of Salency.*

GENEVIEVE, *daughter to Monica.*

HELEN, *daughter to Geneviève, chosen candidate the Rose.*

THERESA, URSULA, } *chosen candidates for the Rose. latter is a mute character.*

BASIL, *son to Geneviève.*

MARIANNE, *a neighbour of Geneviève's.*

Madame DUMOND, *a grocer of Noyon.*

MIMI, *Madame Dumond's little Girl.*

THE BAILIFF *, *a mute character.*

Companies of young women belonging to Sale muſicians, &c.

The three candidates are to be dreſſed in white, flowing hair.

The ſcene, Salency.

* An inferiour judge. T.

THE FESTIVAL OF SALENCY;

OR,

The ELECTION of a QUEEN of the ROSE.

La vertu ſous le chaume attire nos hommages.
M. le Cardinal de Bernis.
Virtue attracts our homage tho' in rags.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The ſtage repreſents a large room in a cottage, with a clothes-preſs on one ſide of it.

MARIANNE, HELEN.

Mar. WELL, thanks be praiſed! here am I come back to the Feſtival, howſomever.

Hel. You have been at Noyon a long while indeed.

Mar. Aye, truly; my uncle was ſo bad! now though, he's got pretty hearty; and, ſays he to me,

me, Marianne, 'tis the eighth of June, get thee gone to Salency, see the coronation and be back to-morrow. Ad-zooks, upon that off sets I; and, by good luck, I lit upon a gentlewoman, (a noted grocer of our town) who was likewise a coming to the Festival, and so she brought me with her. Ah, she's a clever gentlewoman! she made me chatter so, the whole way, all about Salency and the Queens of the Rose.——She's to be at the Prior's, along with her little girl, mademoiselle Mimi, a brave child.—Oh, dear, you must have a peep at her—though she an't but seven year old, she's more sensible than she is big.—But pray, Helen, you're one of the candidates, an't ye?

Hel. Yes, I was nominated a week ago, with Ursula and Theresa.

Mar. Aye, you'll get the Chaplet, I'll be bound for that.

Hel. * Why should I? Ursula and Theresa are such good girls!—Oh, believe me, I shall feel no vexation if either of them obtains the Rose.—Theresa especially, I love her so much! we have always lived together like two sisters, as you know, Marianne.

Mar. Theresa is a smart girl, vast good-natured, vast ready to oblige, vast well brought up; yet,

* The candidates for the Rose are not made to speak quite in the rustick style; for all the girls at Salency, who have pretensions to that honour, are much noticed by the ladies belonging to their Lord's family, and continually invited to his house, which entirely takes off the coarseness of their village-manners. It is easy at Salency, to distinguish, merely by their language and behaviour, those who have obtained the Chaplet of Roses, or those to whom the publick voice has destined it; though indeed, generally speaking, all the inhabitants of this place are as much superiour to other peasants in manners and phraseology, as in morals and virtue.

for

for all that, you're more deſerving than ſhe, and there an't a ſingle ſoul but ſays ſo.—Beſides, your mother had the Roſe in her time; and then your grand-mother, Monica, ſhe was Queen too; all that reckons let me tell you; and marry, 'tis but right it ſhould.—There certainly an't an honeſter family than yourn in all Salency.—Your father, that's dead and gone, was the worthieſt creature!—Lord love him!—Oh, talking of that, there's your brother, Baſil, in high joy, I'll be ſworn—for Thereſa's a candidate, and if ſhe don't get the Roſe now, ſtill, being choſe one of the three, is always a great honour; for 'tis e'en almoſt ſure ſhe'll have it in two years. Baſil likes Thereſa, but your mother won't give into that; I've heard her ſay, a hundred times over; "None but a Queen of the Roſe ſhall have my boy."—Aye, and ſhe'll ſtick cloſe to it.——Oh, neighbour Geneviève, you've got a rare head of your own!—ſhe's a notable woman!—But I ſay, Helen, is your mother gone out?

Hel. Yes, to the Prior's.

Mar. Aye, aye, to be ſure; the Prior and the Bailiff * are your judges at the election; ſo, forſooth, ſhe muſt tell every thing to them.—La! methinks I hears Geneviève; how ſhe is prating, I'll be bound for't, and ſaying all ſhe can think of in your praiſe!—'Tis, Helen this, and Helen that—aye, I ſees her now, I declare.—She'll not forget to tell every morſel of that long tedious ſtory about your grand-mother, Monica, whom

* The deciſion principally depends upon what is ſaid by the Prior, becauſe he knows more of the young women than any other perſon. The Lord of Salency names the Queen; but his choice is governed by the depoſitions which are made before the Prior and the Bailiff.

you

you have tended so much, watched so much, and been so careful of—

Hel. No, no, my mother won't talk about that; for what is there to brag of?—Can any body do otherwise?—If one has a grand-mother, 'tis impossible not to love and tend her; perhaps—

Mar. Why that's seemingly a thing of course, howsomever, there an't no girl in Salency more respectful to her grand-mother, than you be to Monica—for one hardly ever sees you o'Sundays and holidays dancing in the market-place; 'cause, forsooth, you stays at home with Monica; and if so be you're very fond of dancing, and only seventeen neither!—O'my conscience, 'tis vast good at your age—it delights every body—that alone deserves the Rose—and so I'll e'en go straightways to the Prior, and make my deposition as well as the rest of 'em, and tell him all my mind—and all the pretty things of your doing that's come to my knowledge.

Hel. Prithee, neighbour, speak up for Theresa.

Mar. Why, as I hopes to be saved, one would imagine you'd be sorry to have the Rose!

Hel. Ah, Marianne, nobody wishes for it so much as I do, that's certain; and when I think it may be mine to-day, my heart beats with such violence!—Lookye, during this whole week past, I have never closed my eyes for thinking of it.—I oftentimes say to myself; gracious powers, if I am crowned, what joy will this house be in!—Such satisfaction to my mother!—and my poor grand-mother, what will she say?—it would make her twenty years younger!—Oh, how happy I should be then!—And my brother, and my god-

mother,

mother, and my couſin Felix, how joyous it would make them all!—and Thereſa too, believe me, Marianne, even ſhe, though a candidate herſelf, would with pleaſure ſee me crowned.—Neither ſhould I be envied by Urſula: ſo think how ardently I ought to wiſh for the Roſe, as my ſucceſs would vex no one, and give ſo much ſatisfaction to my family!

Mar. Without reckoning your being ſure of a huſband within the year.—Nay, nay, there's no need of bluſhes; you very well knows that as ſoon as ever a girl be crowned, 'tis who ſhall get her firſt; ſhe's courted by every lad in the village; the beſt portion here is the Chaplet of Roſes; and, forſooth, 'tis natural enough that the moſt prudent ſhould be moſt beloved. Men would be ſimpletons indeed, if they did not think that. But I fancy my neighbour's a coming.

Hel. Oh, yes; here is my mother.

SCENE II.

GENEVIEVE, MARIANNE, HELEN.

Mar. (*To Geneviéve.*) WELL, good day, neighbour.

Gen. Hah, goſſip Marianne!—and how long have you been here?

Mar. I'm come to ſee Helen crowned.

Gen. Marianne, what a day is this!—On this day twenty years, I was elected Queen; and I remember it as well as if 'twere only yeſterday. How I did quake! Oh, I was in a ſad pucker! and, till the moment of proclamation came, felt myſelf neither

neither more nor less than a downright idiot—but all that was nothing to the agonies of a poor mother who longs to see her daughter crowned.—Methinks the coronation of that dear girl would afford me a thousand times more honour than I received from my own. If you did but know what a fever I've been in for this whole fort'night past!—and since yesterday, especially!—Ah, Marianne! mothers only can be sensible of all this—

Mar. And yet, you told me, six weeks agone, that you was as good as sure the Rose would be Helen's.

Gen. I did wrong to say it; there are so many girls at Salency who deserve as much as Helen!—Heaven punishes the presumptuous, Marianne; and that thought is dreadful.—In a word, nearer and nearer as the time approaches, more and more timorous grow I.

Mar. Did you find the Prior?

Gen. No, he was out—but I shall go again.

Mar. This must be a very busy day with him.

Gen. Aye, that it is, I promise you.

Mar. He's judge, forsooth, which makes him full of care.

Gen. Besides, he is so conscientious!—then, he loves us all as if we were his own children!—

Mar. He would not leave Salency for all the gold of Peru.

Gen. Oh, that's a sure thing.—Dear worthy man!—may the Lord preserve him to us!—But tell me, Helen, where's our mother?

Hel. In bed and asleep—she never closed her eyes last night.

Gen. She is in ſuch a taking about the coronation!—Bleſſed virgin! 'tis well if ſhe don't fall ſick along with it.—*(Turning round.)* Who's that creeping about the door? Go and ſee, Helen.

Hel. (*Opening the door.*) It is Thereſa.

SCENE III.

GENEVIEVE, MARIANNE, THERESA, HELEN.

The. MADAME Geneviève, I am come to tell you that the Bailiff is at home, if you wiſh to ſee him—Urſula's mother and mine are both gone.—

Gen. Thankye, my dear; then, I'll go too.

The. The market's quite crowded with people already; ſtrangers, and gentlemen, and ſuch fine ladies!—

Gen. Good heaven!

Mar. Well, I muſt go and ſee that, howſomever.

Gen. Come, dame, give me your arm; you ſhall lead me to the Bailiff's; for I am ſo overpowered, that I hardly know how to walk; every thing ſeems turning round with me—

Mar. (*Giving her arm to Geneviève.*) Well, neighbour, come; I'll help you along.

[*They go out.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

HELEN, THERESA.

The. SO, Helen, here we are got together by ourſelves at laſt; well, I'm very glad, for I was quite earneſt to talk with you about our yeſterday's adventure.—I've done nothing ever ſince but think of it, backwards and forwards.—How I have repented leaving you ſo by yourſelf!—If it was known, I ſhould be a loſt girl, my dear Helen—

Hel. Pho, pho, make yourſelf eaſy; I have promiſed to keep the ſecret, and I ſhall be true to my word, never fear.

The. Lookye, Helen, 'tis not from my having any eye to the Roſe, for that will be yours, all the village expects it; there's not a ſoul who would go againſt you.—Then, I know very well that Urſula too ſhould be preferred before me; but ſtill, I have been declared a candidate, and that's always a great happineſs.—Helen, I tell you every thing—Baſil!—in ſhort, my mother would be quite proud indeed if I ſhould marry Baſil.—Baſil, ſon, grand-ſon, and brother, to Queens of the Roſe; for you'll be one, that's a ſure thing.—Well now, if this unfortunate ſtory is known, all's over directly—I ſhall then be ſtruck off from the liſt of candidates, excluded from the Roſe for ever!—It would kill my mother, and me too, Helen—my blood runs cold only with thinking of it!—

Hel. Excluded from the Roſe!—Don't talk ſo, Thereſa; 'tis terrible to hear you!—and after all, you

you have not committed such a great fault neither—you were frightened, you were tired; 'twas a long way to go, and then, returning through that wood, which looked as dark as pitch, was beyond your courage.—This is all, however—

The. But only think of the good action I left you to do all alone by yourself!—and then, that you should have courage to take the old woman back to Chauni!—Still, Helen, I can't help being sorry that you have not the credit of it; but, thank heaven, 'tis not necessary to obtain you the Rose.—Lack-a-day, when I think of your being obliged to return through that wood in the dark!—

Hel. Oh, it frightened me sadly; I called to mind all gossip Marianne's stories about ghosts. I had not a drop of blood left in my veins!

The. Aye, there's old Mathurine, who died last Saturday; she always went to pick up leaves in the wood.

Hel. To be sure she came across my mind above twenty times.

The. And for all that, did you hear nothing?

Hel. Oh, yes.—Every now and then I heard something like the noise of leaves—and it went *rustle, rustle, rustle,* all round about me!—

The. Mercy upon us!——so it went *rustle, rustle.*

Hel. Just, for the world, like any body picking up leaves!

The. What a sad thing!—it must have been the spirit of poor Mathurine.—However, you are in high luck not to have seen her—she was spoke with, the night before last, by Nancy and her mother.

Hel.

Hel. Yes, yes, I know that very well—she appeared to them in the form of a large white sheep.

The. Aye, a sheep as big as a calf, by Nancy's account.—I should have died on the spot, for my part.—But do tell me, at what hour did you get home? and what did your mother say?

Hel. Ah, Theresa! not to injure you, I told a lye for the first time in my life—that's what hurt me most of all. I got home by nine o'clock; my mother was quite benumbed with fear; and it was; "Why so late, Helen? and why are you come back without leaves? and where's Theresa?" All these questions dashed me sadly; however, I answered as we two had agreed; "Mother, (says I) I left Theresa just at hand, for my ass fell into a ditch, and we were I don't know how long a getting him out again:" and then I mentioned more reasons besides. My mother believed all this; and to be sure I was very glad; though it gave me concern to see her so noodled—indeed, Theresa, it quite went to my heart, so that I fell a crying.—But how did you get off?

The. Why I crept along the little by-path which is behind the village and so full of nettles that nobody uses it, and so I got to our house by jumping over the garden hedge, that I might not be seen: after this, I hid myself 'till night came on in our barn, where I was as much frightened as if I'd been in the wood; 'twas then I thought of you, repented of what I had done, and quite sobbed again—and says I to myself, had I but taken heart, I should now have been with Helen, and we should both have returned to the village with our heads a mile high, and quite proud indeed!—instead of which, Helen must be obliged

to conceal her own good action, that she may hide my fault!—And then I cried, and cried so, heaven knows!—In short, when 'twas pitch-dark, I slipped out again through our garden, returned home along the village, and told my mother the same story you told yours.

Hel. Nobody saw us come back separately, and the good woman at Chauni does not know our names; so this adventure can never be found out; and I swear to you again, my dear Theresa, that I will, as long as I live, keep it secret from every body, happen what may.

The. (*Embracing her.*) Oh, Helen! how I love you!

Hel. Well, your love is not thrown away!—Hark, somebody raps at the door, I believe.—(*She calls out.*) Coming.

The. 'Tis the Prior's voice, as I hope to be saved!—Aye, sure enough, here he is—and with that gentlewoman, the grocer of Noyon, who brought Marianne to Salency.

SCENE V.

THE PRIOR, MADAME DUMOND, MIMI, HELEN, THERESA.

Hel. LACK-A-DAY, that my mother is gone out!—

Pri. Good morning to you, Helen; this is madame Dumond, who came from Noyon on purpose to see the Festival—

M. Du. And to get acquainted with the candidates.

Pri. Here are two—

M. Du. I muſt ſalute them.—What fine girls! [*Helen and Thereſa curtſey to her.*

Hel. Thereſa, be kind enough to go and ſee if you can find my mother.

The. I'll run directly. [*She goes out.*

Mimi. (*Pointing to Helen.*) Mamma, that's her who will be Queen, an't it?

Hel. Oh, mameſelle, I'm not the moſt deſerving, far from it—

Mimi. Pray now, mamma, beg the Prior to give her the Roſe—

M. Du. Aye, that will do the buſineſs at once to be ſure.

Mimi. Well, though, ſhe certainly is the prettieſt, and the faireſt too; the others are as brown as any thing.

M. Du. Harkye then, Mimi; don't you love Gogo, our neighbour's little girl?

Mimi. No, indeed; ſhe always ſcratches me; I don't love her at all.

M. Du. Yet, ſhe is very fair and pretty.

Mimi. But ſhe is as naughty as I don't know what.

M. Du. Then, is it better to be good than handſome?

Mimi. Why mayn't one be handſome without ſcratching people?

M. Du. Certainly. But beauty fades, and goodneſs is laſting; beſides, 'tis by goodneſs that a little girl makes her parents happy, and by goodneſs ſhe makes herſelf beloved; ſo you muſt plainly ſee 'tis that alone which deſerves a reward.

Mimi. Yes, yes, very true; I ſhall remember it. Then, mamma, they'll give the Crown to the beſt girl?

M. Du. No doubt of it. (*To the Prior.*) But, sir, you promised to procure for me, in this house, a sight of the greatest curiosities belonging to Salency.

Pri. True, I did. Look, madame Dumond, look attentively on that press—it contains sterling riches.

M. Du. How so?

Mimi. Oh, dear! I wish they'd open it!

Pri. Helen, might we have the key?

Hel. I'll go and try whether my grand-mother will give it to me.

Mimi. Mamma, mayn't I go with her?

M. Du. Yes, yes, get you gone.

[*Helen takes Mimi by the hand and goes out.*

Pri. This family, madame Dumond, is, properly speaking, one of the most considerable in Salency. Were you but to know the piety, the charity of these people—and how much they are respected in the village!—for, with us, virtue alone commands respect.

M. Du. You are very happy, sir, in having the care of such good souls.

Pri. And for it I return my daily thanks to Providence. Think, madame Dumond, during a twenty years residence among the Salencians, I have never seen one wicked action, I have never known one dishonest man!—To give you some idea of their purity of manners and morals, I must tell you the reason why a young woman lost the Rose last year. She was perfectly modest and discreet, though here, indeed, we have no instance of a contrary behaviour; but witnesses deposed, and proved against her, that she had passed almost one entire working-day in idleness, and likewise,

that her brother had made game of an old man; therefore, she was unanimously excluded.

M. Du. What! have the faults of relations any weight?

Pri. Moſt undoubtedly; and this makes the Roſe keep our youths in awe as well as our young women: you may eaſily conceive what care the fathers and brothers take of their behaviour—why the very lad I juſt now mentioned, who contributed to the excluſion of his ſiſter, was on the verge of matrimony, when, for this cauſe alone, the girl's relations broke off the match.

M. Du. Oh, I underſtand you; then a Queen of the Roſe reflects honour upon her whole family.

Pri. Yes, becauſe all the individuals of it may flatter themſelves with having contributed in ſome degree to her coronation.

M. Du. But there is one thing which perplexes me; thoſe perſons who give evidence againſt the candidates are Salencians likewiſe?

Pri. Yes.

M. Du. Well, that muſt produce bickerings and hatred among them?

Pri. By no means. Every depoſition, devoid of the moſt poſitive proofs, would be rejected: it is neither envy, nor diſlike, which inſtigates the witneſſes; but a noble wiſh to preſerve their Roſe from lighting on an unworthy object.—A thirſt for wealth and honours often gives birth to cabals and crimes; but this Roſe, this ſimple rural recompence, offered to virtue, merely excites a laudable emulation, and can only ſerve to increaſe the purity of thoſe innocent hearts which pant to obtain it.—But I hear Helen coming back.—Hah! good old Monica, her grand-mother, is with her.

SCENE VI.

THE PRIOR, MADAME DUMOND, MIMI, MONICA, HELEN.

(*Helen ſupports Monica with one hand, and leads Mimi with the other.*)

Pri. A GOOD morning to you, dame Monica; how is your health?

Mon. So, ſo, worthy ſir.—Why, lack-a-day, come next Saint Louis, I ſhall complete fourſcore; and one feels that.—My legs fail me now; I am ſcarce able to get about.

M. Du. Give her a chair.

Mon. Thankye, my lady; then, by your kind leave, I'll ſit down.

(*Helen places a chair for her near the preſs, and ſhe ſits down.*)

Pri. Dame Monica, we ſent Helen to aſk for the key of your preſs.

Mon. Indeed I don't give the key of our treaſure ſo readily, not to ſuch young folks as her; time enough when ſhe's Queen, if ſo be it pleaſe God I ſhould live to ſee that; but I've brought you the key myſelf though; here it is, ſir.

Pri. * Now, madame Dumond, you are going to behold the higheſt family honours exiſting upon earth. Look there.

* There is nothing fictitious in theſe particulars, they are ſtrictly conformable to truth; and ſo is every word which this drama contains, relative to the manners and cuſtoms of the Salencians.

M. Du.

M. Du. (*Looking into the preſs.*) Hah! What do all thoſe little glaſs niches contain?

Pri. Withered Roſes!

Mon. Aye, they be withered, that's certain; for there's ſome amongſt 'em a good deal above an hundred year old.

Mimi. Oh, this is pretty, mamma!—this is juſt like ſo many ſhrines for reliques!

Pri. Well, madame Dumond! why, you don't ſay one word.

M. Du. I am all amazement!—How! can there have been as many Queens in this family as I ſee Roſes here?

Mon. Aye, and a power more too: I had another daughter that's dead and gone; now ſhe, you muſt know, had a vaſt ſight of girls, and all the Roſes which belongs to that part of the family are wanting; beſides, my father married twice, and his children, by the ſecond wife, inherited Roſes, as 'twas but fair they ſhould; ſo we only have thoſe that came to us in the direct line.

M. Du. (*Still looking into the preſs.*) They are all labelled.

Pri. Yes, with the names of the Queens.

Mon. (*To the Prior.*) Sir, as you knows all this as well as your beads, do ſhew the lady that Roſe which belonged to Mary-Jane Bocard; for 'tis the oldeſt in my belief.

Pri. Is not it quite at the top?

Mon. Aye, can you reach it?

Pri. Yes, I have it in my hand. Let's ſee the date. (*He reads.*) "One thouſand five hundred and twenty."

M. Du. (*Taking up the Roſe which is under a gloſs.*) "One thouſand five hundred and twenty!"

Mon. That's a precious thing now, an't it?

Mimi. (*Looking at the Roſe.*) What, was this a Roſe? how it is altered!—

Mon. Helen, juſt ſhew us that below there, of Catherine Javelle's.

Hel. Yes, grand-mother.

Mon. Catherine Javelle was my mother's ſiſter; ſhe died very young, and her ſtory is an odd one.

Pri. Let us hear it, dame Monica.

Mon. Why then you muſt know as how ſhe was waſhing her linen at the great pond; ſhe had nobody with her but a little boy of ſeven year old, to carry the linen; well, and ſo all on a ſudden, Jack—for that was his name; 'twas Jack the ſon of poor Michelle—

Pri. And this Jack is ſtill living, 'tis honeſt Rouſſel.—

Mon. Right, right.—But you knows the ſtory, ſir—

Pri. No matter, go on.

M. Du. Oh, yes, pray go on.

Mon. Well then—Why, lack-a-day, I forget where I was—

Hel. Where, "All on a ſudden, and at the brink of the pond"—

Mon. Aye—all on a ſudden Jack falls into the pond head foremoſt, *flounce*; ſo there was he in the water—well, upon that, what does my aunt do, but, without ſtanding ſhilly ſhally, jumps in headlong after him, fiſhes up the boy, like a gudgeon, and brings him ſafe out of the water again.

M. Du. Amazing!

Pri. You ſhould know that this pond is very deep.

Mon.

Mon. Oh, quite a pit!—Well, and ſo now we've laided 'em on the turf, as I ſaid; howſoever, Jack had ſwallowed ſuch a deal of water, ſuch a deal, that he was juſt like any body ſounded away!—So, ſays my aunt to herſelf; "What ſhall I do with this here boy, and my linen beſides?"—Well, it grew late, and time for her to get home, and ſhe had half a league to walk: now ſhe had not a ſoul to help her, was all over of a ſhiver, and quite bewildered; but, ſpite of this, ſhe claps Jack aſtride on her ſhoulders, leaves every morſel of her linen behind, and comes back in that manner to the village.

M. Du. I hope ſhe was elected Queen that year.

Mon. Aye, indeed was ſhe. Luck's all, as they ſay; and 'tis vaſt good luck when a young girl lights upon ſuch opportunities as this; forſooth, they don't come every day.

M. Du. (*To the Prior.*) Really, ſir, I am far from thinking your Feſtival the moſt curious thing at Salency; for to ſee and hear all this, is a great deal more ſo.

Pri. That's juſt what I told you. (*Looking at his watch.*) Why 'tis twelve o'clock; we muſt be going.

M. Du. I can't take my eyes off from that preſs.

Pri. Indeed, theſe reſpectable honours, theſe proofs of virtue, are full as much to be valued as all the antiquated ſcraps of parchment which make a certain claſs of men ſo vain!

M. Du. I could look with dry eyes upon every parchment in the world, and yet, do what I will, the ſight of theſe withered Roſes makes the tears

trickle down my cheeks.—Ah, how ſorry I am that Mimi is not five or ſix years older!—then, ſhe would have felt all this.

Mimi. You muſt bring me again, mamma, when I grow bigger.

Pri. She is right; this is a good air for girls to breathe.—Farewell, dame Monica—

Mon. Lack-a-day, ſir, Geneviève will be ſo vexed—

Pri. I ſhall return again—

Mon. The proclamation will certainly be at five o'clock, won't it, ſir?

Pri. Yes, dame. (*Taking her hand.*) Make yourſelf eaſy, good woman—pray make yourſelf eaſy.

Mon. Kind heaven!

Pri. Adieu, till by-and-by.

M. Du. Farewell, dear Monica.

Mon. Your ſervant, madam.

[*Madame Dumond and the Prior go out. Helen opens the door for them, and drops ſeveral curtſies, which Madame Dumond returns after having ſaluted her. Meanwhile Monica remains at the front of the ſtage.*

Mon. The Prior tells me *to make myſelf eaſy*; that ſeems a good ſign—heaven grant it may be ſo! (*To Helen, who comes back.*) Helen, did you hear what the Prior ſaid?

Hel. Yes, grand-mother, I did indeed; and it has quite turned me inſide out.—Why he took your hand—

Mon. Aye, and ſqueezed it too, my dear.—I was afeard of ſpeaking to him about you, cauſe of that gentlewoman.

Hel.

Hel. Oh, grandmother—I now feel good fore-boding—

Mon. And so do I.—Gracious powers!—if I was this very day, nay, but five hours hence, to see you with the Crown of Roses!—then, I should die contented.—But harkye, child, don't go to be puffed up by it now; don't go to fancy yourself better than Ursula, or Theresa; for that would spoil all.

Hel. Why should I be puffed up? If I gain the Crown, I shall owe it to you and to my mother; I am only proud of being her child and yours.

Mon. Dear girl!—come and kiss me.—God will give you his blessing, for you deserve it.—Why what's the matter? you seem in tears—

Hel. True—I was thinking that if by any mishap I don't gain the Rose, now you flatter yourself with the hope of seeing it mine—you will be so grieved—so grieved—

Mon. Don't sob in this manner, my dear.—Why, if you should not get it, we must submit with patience.—Ought we to grumble against Providence?—However, the Prior told me to be easy, and he did not throw out that for nothing, I'll warrant you.——Come, my dear, shut up the press, for you must go and get dinner ready.——An't your brother come home yet?

Hel. No, he's still at the other end of the village with poor Robert, who is very sick, and has no comfort but in Basil's company; and my brother, who loves Robert as dearly as his eye-sight, will at least stay with him till the time appointed for the ceremony.

Mon. 'Tis very right, very right. Give me back my key—and I hope to open the press again this evening, that I may lock up your Crown with the other.

Hel. Oh, my dear grand-mother!

Mon. Give me your arm, my child, and come along. [*They go out.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE the First.

THE PRIOR, GENEVIEVE.

Pri. YES, dear Geneviève, I muſt ſpeak with you in private.

Gen. Alas, ſir! why you look I don't know how—you ſtrike me all aghaſt—

Pri. I am diſturbed, I confeſs it—

Gen. You are going to tell me of ſome miſfortune—

Pri. You know I have always had a particular regard for your family, and I am now about to communicate a thing which will give you great uneaſineſs, my dear good woman, and that diſtreſſes me very much.

Gen. Heavens!—does it concern Helen?

Pri. Yes.

Gen. Is it poſſible?—Then there are depoſitions againſt her?

Pri. There are, and—ſerious ones too!

Gen. Oh, ſir, they muſt be falſehoods!

Pri.

Pri. Do not weep, my dear Geneviève—perhaps Helen may juſtify herſelf; ſhe muſt be heard, however.

Gen. But tell me then, what is the matter?

Pri. She was ſeen to return home late laſt night quite alone.

Gen. That's falſe; Thereſa was with her.

Pri. No; Thereſa came home clandeſtinely about five o'clock, and hid herſelf; but, nevertheleſs, ſhe was ſeen.

Gen. Well then, I ſay 'tis falſe—downright falſe.—Helen!——Where is ſhe?—(*Calling very loud.*) Helen, Helen!—Oh, here ſhe is.

Hel. (*Entering haſtily.*) Mother—

Gen. (*To the Prior.*) Come, now, I don't ſpeak to her ſecretly; I make no ſigns.—Queſtion her yourſelf, ſir.

Hel. (*Aſide.*) Good heaven! What does my mother mean?

Gen. Helen a liar!—Helen!—No, 'tis too heavy a charge to make me apprehenſive.—No, ſince that is what they ſay, I'm not afraid.

Pri. (*To Helen.*) Come, my child, and anſwer me without evaſion.

Gen. Oh, ſhe has no deceit, I'll be bound for that: I'll cut my right hand off if ſhe ever boggled about ſpeaking truth once in her whole life.

Hel. (*Aſide.*) I tremble!

Pri. Helen, you have, till now, been a pattern to this village; and I ſtill give you credit for the virtues which you hitherto have practiſed; I am perſuaded that falſe appearances miſled thoſe by whom you now ſtand accuſed: but, to cut the matter ſhort, ſeveral witneſſes have juſt depoſed

the

the same thing against you, though they were examined separately—

Gen. You keep her upon thorns; there's no need of so much shilly shally—Why lookye, Helen, they say you came back from the wood late last night, all alone, and that Theresa hid herself.—Dear heart, she turns pale!—'tis only with surprize though—I know her—I am sure of her, sir.

Pri. But answer me, Helen—is this imputation false? The way to justify yourself is easy; for, if you wish it, I will name your accusers and confront you with them.

Gen. Well, Helen?

Hel. (*Aside.*) What torture!

Pri. If the charge is just, recollect that by denying it you would tax those persons with calumny who have only spoken truth—and if you are innocent, why these tears, why this despair?

Hel. Yes, I am innocent—

Gen. Then speak, explain yourself.—Mercy upon me! I e'en almost begin to quake; I am all of a shiver, I declare.—Explain yourself, Helen.

Hel. I cannot.—(*Aside.*) Oh, Theresa!—

Gen. How? you can't explain yourself!—But no, it is not possible!—she's so simple, that's the thing.—Only answer this question.—Did you tell me a lye last night?——(*In a severe tone.*) Helen!—can it be?—No, no, she's scared to death, she's quite at her wit's end, that's all.—Helen!—my child!—do speak, for you put me into such agonies!—

Hel. Oh, my mother!——I am innocent.

Gen. Then you did not tell a lye?—The witnesses are slanderers, an't they?

Hel. Oh, no, no—

Gen. How? wretch!—

Hel.

Hel. My dear mother, if you were but acquainted—

Gen. (*With paſſion.*) I your mother!——I renounce you.—Oh heaven! why did I live to ſee this? [*She ſinks into a chair, ſobbing.*

Hel. (*Throwing herſelf at Geneviève's feet.*) Well, my dear mother, hear me—

Gen. (*Puſhing her away.*) Let me alone.

Pri. (*Taking Geneviève by the hand.*) Poor dear woman!

Gen. (*To the Prior.*) Ah, ſir, take pity on us! ſave the credit of an honeſt family!—I ſtill have a boy remaining, and muſt he be branded?—Oh, that would kill me quite!

Pri. From reſpect to your family, I will hush this affair, and the particulars ſhall remain a ſecret; for, I promiſe you, Thereſa ſhall not be interrogated, and ſhe alone could diſcover all.

Hel. (*Sobbing.*) Still, nothing could be diſcovered to my diſhonour—

Gen. Silence, worthleſs girl!

Pri. And can you really have the aſſurance, Helen, to aſſert your innocence, when you confeſs that you told an untruth, that you returned home alone, that you ſent away Thereſa?—

Hel. Oh, no, I did not ſend her away, ſhe went back entirely of her own accord: ſo far, however, I may venture to ſpeak.

Gen. Impudence!——At laſt the whole ſtory comes out!—What, you returned after Thereſa, late at night!——Why you've told an hundred lyes.—And muſt I hear this with my own ears?—Oh, my poor mother! ſhe will be thunder-ſtruck indeed!

Pri. The time appointed for the proclamation approaches—

Gen.

Gen. The proclamation!—and I once hoped that this wretch—Alas, all my joys are over!

Hel. 'Tis too much, too much indeed; I muſt ſpeak ——

Gen. Stand off.

Hel. Mother, dear mother! liſten——

Gen. Inſolence!—*(She gives her a violent puſh. Helen falls on her knees at ſome diſtance, then claſps her hands together and exclaims:)* Oh, heaven!

Gen. *(In tears, running to her and raiſing her.)* She is hurt!—This alone was wanting—

Hel. No—but my dear mother, liſten—

Pri. Geneviève, let us loſe no more time; come with me to the Bailiff's, that we may perſuade him not to divulge this unhappy affair: the witneſſes themſelves, from regard to you, will cheerfully acquieſce in huſhing it—

Gen. Save my family! good ſir, have compaſſion on us!

Pri. Helen, may this teach you to know yourſelf: methinks I begin to diſcover, in your conduct, faults which I never met with before at Salency: but for your reſpectable relations, the loſs of the Crown would not be your only puniſhment—and always recollect that the bright examples you have conſtantly received render you ſtill more culpable. Come, Geneviève, let us ſet off—

Hel. One moment—my dear mother——

Gen. Brazen girl!—ſtir but an inch, and my curſe will fall upon you.

Hel. *(Sinking into a chair.)* Oh, I am quite overpowered!

Gen. *(To the Prior.)* Come, ſir.—Alas, what a grievous day! *[She goes out with the Prior.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

HELEN, *alone, rising.*

MOTHER!—(*Sinking again.*) My courage fails.—She is gone!—Perhaps I might have told every thing—and then, Thereſa would have been undone—and my brother driven to deſpair!—They love each other, they, at leaſt, will marry and be happy!—But what will become of me?—I am clear from ſelf-reproach, and by that thought I ſhall be ſupported.—But 'tis my mother's grief which hurts me moſt of all—often and often did I reſolve to tell her the truth—and yet, I promiſed ſecrecy to Thereſa—ſtill, my mother! to ſee her ſo enraged againſt me wrung my very heart!—I ſhudder only with thinking of it!—How terrible is a mother's wrath! and what muſt it be when deſerved!—My mother too—who never gave me a wry word before—for her to uſe me ſo!—Good heaven! how I trembled from head to foot, when ſhe ſaid; "I renounce you."—Alas, the ſound will never leave my ears!—it went to the bottom of my ſoul—at that moment I was on the point of diſcloſing every thing; but, luckily for poor Thereſa, my mother would not liſten.—Still though, I was wrong; for I might have managed to conceal Thereſa's fault, and yet told the ſtory about that woman.——No; then they'd have known of my returning by myſelf; and beſides, they might have ſent to the woman at Chauni, and ſhe would have ſaid how Thereſa left her in the lurch.—No, 'twas impoſſible to clear up that.—

However,

However, heaven knows my innocence, and that ought to comfort me!——Yet, I ſhall never get the Roſe; and then, my mother, and my poor grand-mother, who both reckon on ſeeing me crowned!—Alas, how unhappy am I!—No, I will not betray Thereſa; my word is pledged—though, after ſhe is married, I'll e'en tell my mother the whole truth; for I really could not live without doing that.——Oh, Baſil! Oh, Thereſa! how much do I ſuffer for your ſakes!——Mercy! there's ſomebody coming——let me hide my tears!

SCENE III.

HELEN, MARIANNE.

Mar. HELEN!—but you're a crying, my dear—what's the matter?

Hel. Nothing, Marianne—

Mar. Nothing!—why you looks as white as a ſheet!—

Hel. I muſt go to my grand-mother.—Good b'ye, Marianne. (*Aſide in going.*) I'll e'en ſet off and hide myſelf 'till after the coronation.

[*She goes out.*

Mar. (*Alone.*) So, here am I left as wiſe as an owl!—What can be the meaning of this?—There's dame Geneviève too, a ſhaking and quaking, and juſt like a mad woman!—and Baſil—Aye, aye, ſomewhat's at bottom of all this here.—Oh, Thereſa's a coming.

SCEN

SCENE IV.

MARIANNE, THERESA.

Mar. DO tell me, Thereſa, have you ſeen Geneviève?

The. No; why do you aſk?

Mar. Cauſe I've juſt met her myſelf.—She was a going to the Bailiff's; I would ha' ſpoke to her, but ſhe neither ſee'd, nor heared—and, all on a ſudden, her ſon Baſil, (who had left Robert for the ſake of being preſent at the ceremony) he, I ſay, comes up with her—and ſo ſhe calls out; "Get thee gone, get thee gone, my poor boy; return again to Robert!"—Then ſhe muttered I don't know what in his ear; upon which he coloured, turned pale, fell a crying; and clapping his two hands afore his eyes, juſt as I does now, ſquats himſelf down upon a ſtone. The Prior, who was along with Geneviève, ſaid ſomewhat to him likewiſe, vaſt ſoftly—and then, the Prior and Geneviève went their ways.

The. Is it poſſible?—But Baſil, what became of him?

Mar. Oh, he ſtayed there in a brown ſtudy for a vaſt long time, with his eyes fixed on the ground—I was very near him, ſo I comes up cloſe; and, when he ſpied me, he gave a ſudden ſtart, glanced a wild look at me, and then, taking to his heels, made off towards Robert's houſe.

The. Heaven!—Where is Helen?

Mar. A crying; and when I came in, ſhe run away.

The.

The. What?—

Mar. Why, Thereſa, you muſt know I am grieved to the very heart—I ſee plain enough as how Helen has done ſomewhat wrong that will hinder her getting the Roſe.

The. Who?—Helen?—Can you believe it?

Mar. She was the jewel of the village, as a body may ſay—I knows all that well enough—but howſomever, I'd be bound for't, there's depoſitions againſt her.

The. Depoſitions!——Ah, let me fly!—

[*She runs out as faſt as poſſible.*

Mar. (*Alone.*) So, here's another!—O'my conſcience, I do believe they're all run ſtark-mad, for it certainly looks like ſome ſtrange whirl in their heads.—

(*Somebody behind the ſcenes calls out.*) Helen, Helen!

Mar. I hears Monica's voice: aye, ſure enough, 'tis ſhe.

SCENE V.

MARIANNE, MONICA.

Mon. HELEN!—Why where can ſhe be?

Mar. (*Giving her arm to Monica, who walks very feebly.*) I can't tell, dame Monica; but ſet yourſelf down, I'll go call her.

Mon. This is the firſt time that I ever wanted Helen without being able to find her.

Mar. But was not ſhe along with you juſt now?

Mon.

Mon. No; and I'd a mind to come here, cauſe this door fronts the market-place; and the time for the proclamation is juſt at hand.—If my Helen be Queen, I ſhall hear the muſicians a little matter ſooner.—Oh, Marianne, how my heart leaps!—

Mar. (*Aſide.*) The poor old ſoul knows nothing; and I muſt not blab, for 'twould certainly kill her.

Mon. (*Calling out.*) Helen, Helen!

Mar. (*Calling out likewiſe, and going to the further end of the ſtage.*) Helen, Helen! your grand-mother calls you—I hears her ſtep—ſhe's a running.

SCENE VI.

MONICA, MARIANNE, HELEN.

Mon. COME, my child——

Mar. (*Aſide.*) How dull ſhe looks!

Hel. Grand-mother—

Mon. Well, my dear, 'tis going for five o'clock!—Why you're quite ſerious!—Thank heaven, for my part, I have no miſgivings.—Lack-a-day, who's this?

Mar. 'Tis Geneviève.

SCENE VII.

MONICA, GENEVIEVE, MARIANNE, HELEN.

Hel. (*Aſide.*) I have not a drop of blood left in my veins!

Mon. Geneviève, come hither; do you bring us any news?

Gen.

Gen. (*Aſide.*) My mother! Oh, heaven!—and Marianne too!—Well, I muſt hold my tongue. (*Aloud.*) Mother, what brings you here? it would be better if you were in your own room.

Mon. No, daughter.—In this very place, juſt twenty years agone, I ſaw our Lord come to take you by the hand.—In this very place I ſaw you crowned, Geneviève—you muſt remember how you clung about my neck—how we both cried.—Oh, may the Almighty ſend me ſuch another day of joy, and then, his will be done! then, I ſhall leave this world without a ſingle wiſh ungratified!

Gen. (*Aſide.*) She rends my very ſoul!

Hel. (*Aſide.*) Oh, what a trial!

Mon. Come hither, Helen; give me your hand. There, 'twas juſt ſo I held your mother when the proceſſion reached our houſe.—You are her child all over, my dear girl; prudent, ſincere, modeſt, like her—an't ſhe, Geneviève?

Gen. (*Aſide.*) Oh, good heaven! good heaven!

Mon. My children, why you're quite panick-ſtruck! you don't drop a ſingle word! Well, 'tis natural.—I, who have ſeen two daughters and one ſiſter crowned, am ſomewhat ſteadier; but yet, my heart beats moſt violently. (*Looking at Helen, whoſe hand ſhe holds.*) How you colour!—and tremble like an aſpen leaf!—Geneviève, come and cheer the poor little ſoul; come, give her a kiſs, I beg of you!—Helen, go to your mother.

Hel. (*Sobbing and throwing her arms round Monica's neck.*) Oh, my dear grand-mother! you are the only perſon whom I now dare to embrace.

Gen. Alas!—

Mon.

Mon. Why so, my child?—Genevieve, what is the matter?—I never saw you thus before.

Mar. (*Aside.*) Oh, there certainly must be some terrible thing in the wind!

Mon. Well, Genevieve, once more, I say, come and embrace our child. Run to her, Helen.

Hel. (*Speaking to her mother in a supplicating tone.*) My dear mother!—(*Stopping forward, and then speaking aside.*) Ah, what a look! [*She stops.*

Mon. How now?—

Gen. Why mother—the thing is this, I am vexed at your being so set upon it that she'll have the Crown.

Mon. What?—Do you know any bad news?—You are silent.—Is the Queen proclaimed?

Gen. I can't tell.

Mon. Ah, you hide something from me.—And Basil, at such an hour as this, why is he not present?—Marianne!—You all weep!—

Gen. Gracious powers! I hear a noise.—Ah, what are we about to learn?—Oh, my dear mother, if you love me, summon courage, summon resolution!

Mon. (*Weeping.*) Alas, my child! they are not to be looked for at my age.

Hel. Now protect me heaven!

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

MONICA, GENEVIEVE, MARIANNE, HELEN, *and* THERESA, (*out of breath, running in hastily, with her hair dishevelled.*)

The. HELEN!—

Gen. Why this mighty haste?—

The. (*Seeing Helen and rushing into her arms.*) Helen!—You are proclaimed Queen!—

Hel. How?

Mon. Kind heaven!

Gen. Can it be?

Mar. What a happiness!

The. (*Embracing Helen several times.*) Helen, Helen is crowned!—Madame Geneviéve, I alone was guilty; I have confessed all; Helen is Queen!

Gen. I shall die!—

Hel. (*Catching Geneviève in her arms.*) Oh, my mother!—

Mon. Geneviéve!

Hel. (*Still supporting Genviève.*) Alas, my mother!—Water, Theresa!—Water, Marianne!—

Mon. It was too much for her!

The. See, she comes to herself!

Hel. She opens her eyes!

Gen. Helen—my daughter!—

Mon. She supports you—she is Queen!

Gen. Ah! is that true?

The. You'll see, you'll see; they'll soon come and fetch her. I left the whole posse about three hundred paces off, and bounded here myself in the twinkling of an eye; but they, being in procession, move slowly.

Gen. (*Embracing Helen.*) Dear Helen!—my poor child——thou art innocent!——thou art Queen!—Good heaven! we are neither to be killed by ſorrow nor joy!

Mon. But what was it then, that you kept from my knowledge?

Gen. Why, what is it you have confeſſed, Thereſa?—Helen came home by herſelf laſt night, ſhe told me a lye, however—

The. This is the ſtory: you know we went yeſterday to pick up leaves in the copſe; well, there, we found an old woman who had tumbled into a ditch; ſhe was hurt and in tears; ſo we lugged her out; and then ſhe told us that ſhe lived at Chauni, but ſhould not be able to get back. Well, I propoſed to ſet her on our aſs, and to bring her home with us: "But then, (ſays Helen) who'll dreſs her wounds? There's ſurgeons at Chauni, 'tis there we muſt take her." So, upon that, the good woman quite ſobbed again for joy, ſaying how ſhe wiſhed to get back to Chauni. "Come along, come along, (cries Helen) 'tis as good as done;" and ſo up ſhe pops the woman on her aſs.—But zooks, (ſays I) 'tis above a league from here to Chauni, we ſhan't be back by nine o'clock—and then we muſt go all through the wood at night.—"I know you are timerſome (replies Helen) ſo e'en get you home, and I'll go by myſelf."—Aye, (ſays I) but you're timerſome too, Helen.—"No, no, I've got the better of that," ſays ſhe.—In ſhort, we ſtood argufying ſome time longer, till the upſhot of the matter was, that my heart failed me; ſo I left Helen and the woman in the copſe, after we had agreed that Helen ſhould conceal this, and that I ſhould not ſhew myſelf in the village till night.

Gen

Gen. Oh, Helen!—I was unworthy of a child like you—I accuſed, injured, and caſt you off—

Hel. But, my dear mother, could you do otherwiſe, when appearances—

Gen. Appearances!—I ſhould not have believed them.

Mon. I am all amazement!

Mar. This ſtrikes one dumb!

Hel. But only think, mother, what Thereſa has done for me—ſhe went and accuſed herſelf—

Mar. Aye, that ſhe did, Lord love her! and without ſtanding ſhilly ſhally, neither; for no ſooner had I ſaid as how you was one and all got a crying, than ſhe gueſſed the cauſe of the wranglement, and darted away like lightning.

Gen. Dear girl!

Mon. Good ſoul!

Gen. (*To Thereſa.*) So then, you went to find the Prior?

The. Yes, at the very moment when they were going to meet for the final judgement, I deſired to ſpeak in the market-place before every body; they were unwilling to hear me, but I made ſuch a buſtle that they could not any how be off: well, there, I told my ſtory, from beginning to end, before them all; the inſtant I had done, they cried out, "Long live Helen our Queen." So ſhe was proclaimed directly by the Lord, the Prior, and the Bailiff; upon which I came running hither.

Gen. Well, this action makes amends for the fault you committed yeſterday, which, after all, only proceeded from a childiſh fear, and time will correct that.—Thereſa, Baſil loves you, I know it; and to-morrow, my dear, I will aſk you for him of your mother

The. Oh, madame Geneviéve!—

Hel. (*Embracing Thereſa.*) Dear Thereſa!

Mon. (*To Geneviéve.*) You were before-hand with me, Geneviéve; I was juſt a going to ſay the ſame thing.

Gen. I was very ſure, mother, that I ſhould not be thwarted by you.—But what's this I hear?

[*Ruſtick muſick is heard.*

The. 'Tis the muſicians!—'tis the whole proceſſion!

Gen. (*To Helen.*) My child—go and aſk your grand-mother's bleſſing.

Hel. (*Running to throw herſelf at Monica's feet.*) May my two dear parents bleſs their child!—and may heaven preſerve them to me!

[*Monica and Geneviéve embrace her.*

Mon. I cannot ſpeak!—but the Almighty reads my heart, and ſees there, all the good I wiſh you!

Gen. Remain, as you are, always pious and diſcreet: we can aſk nothing better for our dear deſerving girl!

Mar. Happy family!

The. Oh, Baſil!—where is he?

Gen. Do ſend for him, Marianne.

Mar. I'll go my own ſelf.—Ah, here he comes, and all the folks with him. [*Ruſtick muſick.*

SCENE

SCENE IX.

THE LORD OF SALENCY, THE PRIOR, THE BAILIFF, MONICA, GENEVIEVE, MARIANNE, HELEN, URSULA, THESA, BASIL, MADAME DUMOND, MME. with other ladies, a company of young women, muficians, &c.

Basil runs through the group and throws his arms round the neck of Helen, who is still kneeling before her mother and grand-mother. Monica is seated.

Bas. MY dear Helen—my dear sister!—

Gen. and Mon. My son!—*(They weep and embrace each other; the reft of the people pause to contemplate this scene.)*

Mon. My children, help me to rise. *(They assist her. The Lord, the Prior, and the Bailiff, come forward.)*

The Lord. What a glorious day is this, my dear madame Monica, both for you and for Salency!—since the good deed of one Salencian girl does honour to us all! *(The young women surround Helen and embrace her with demonstrations of emotion and joy. The Lord speaks to the Prior, and points to the young women.)* What stranger, who beheld this sight, would guess that Helen is now surrounded only by her rivals?

Pri. Happy the man who knows how to value the inestimable good of possessing this favoured corner of the globe!

Mon. (To the Lord.) That nothing may be wanting to our joy, we aſk leave of our worthy Lord to make a match between Baſil and Thereſa—

Baſ. Kind fate!

The Lord. Dame Monica, you cannot do better; Thereſa deſerves to be your child: not that her avowal of the truth has excited my admiration, for concealment, in ſuch a caſe, had been monſtrous; but what I applaud is the noble and candid manner in which ſhe confeſſed her fault. She might have intruſted the ſecret with two or three perſons only, as that would have been ſufficient to reinſtate Helen in all her claims upon the Roſe; but, inſtead of that, ſhe wiſhed to make the triumph of her friend conſpicuous to every eye; for it was in the publick market-place where ſhe told her ſtory, without once endeavouring to palliate her errour, mindful of nothing but Helen's renown, and yet perſuaded that ſhe was robbing herſelf of fame and the Roſe for ever.—This is what merits the eſteem and applauſe of good Salencians; this is what deſerves the title offered her by you.—But let us no longer defer the affecting ceremony which gives a crown to virtue. Come, Helen, ſeparate yourſelf a moment from your worthy relations, while I conduct you to the church, that is the moſt pleaſing of my privileges, and honours me ſo much, that I cannot even yield it up to your mother. *(He advances, and preſents her with his hand; Helen curtſeys, and leans upon his arm.)* Geneviève, will you follow us?—and you, Dame Monica, can you venture to go likewiſe?

Mon. Yes, yes, my Lord; for now methinks I am only ſixteen again.

Gen. My dear good mother, Baſil, Thereſa, and I, will aſſiſt you.

Mon.

Mon. Come then, dear children, and ſupport your happy old parent.

The Lord. I ſhall return hither with the Queen, as my duty requires; and then I flatter myſelf that ſhe, her family, and all the village, will go to my houſe and dance 'till night.

Mon. Aye, with our whole hearts.

The Lord. Well, let us ſet off——and march ſlowly, on good old Monica's account.

(*The Lord leads out the Queen; Monica follows, ſupported by Geneviève, Baſil, and Thereſa. The Prior and Bailiff go next; the young women follow, and are ſucceeded by the ſtrangers, the other ſpectators, and the muſicians, who cloſe the proceſſion. As ſoon as the proceſſion moves, the muſicians play a ruſtick air. Madame Dumond and Mimi remain behind.*)

Mimi. Well, mamma, why don't you follow them?—'Tis ſo pretty!

M. Du. I am quite ſtruck!—Though nothing but a tradeſwoman, I came four whole leagues to ſee this—but let me tell you, Mimi, ſuch a ſight deſerves the preſence of a queen—yes, I'd anſwer for it, a queen would be charmed, tranſported to behold theſe good, theſe worthy Salencians!

Mimi. Come then, mamma, let us go after them.

M. Du. Well, away with you. Oh! why was I not born at Saleney? [*They go out.*

THE

MILLENER;

A DRAMA,

OF ONE ACT.

Persons of the Drama.

Madame Dupre, *a millener.*

Justina, *her principal ſhop-girl.*

Anne,
Martha,
Joſepha,
Iſabella. } *Shop-girls.*

The Marchioneſs de Lince.

The Baroneſs d'Elsac.

The Scene, Madame Dupré's houſe at Paris.

THE MILLENER.

Honour and ſhame from no Condition riſe;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
Pope, Eſſay on Man. T.

SCENE the Firſt.

The ſtage repreſents a ſhop, and at the further end a glaſs door which looks to the ſtreet.

Madame Dupré is ſitting at work, with Juſtina by her ſide; Anne ſits next to Juſtina; and oppoſite to them are Martha, Iſabella, and Joſepha, at work likewiſe. Candles ſtand on the counters.

Madame Dupré, *after a ſhort ſilence, looking up, and obſerving that the girls oppoſite to her are whiſpering.*

HOW now, young folks, what's the cauſe of all this whiſpering?—Is it thus you work?—Muſt I always have my eyes upon you?—Application and induſtry are very requiſite in your way

of life.—Look at Juſtina—does ſhe ever ſit liſtening and ſtaring about? She only thinks of her buſineſs—and yet, ſhe loves to laugh as well as another, 'tis natural at her age; but there is a time for all things. *(A long ſilence.)* Juſtina, ſome thread.

Juſ. Here, madam. *(A ſilence; after which the girls oppoſite to Madame Dupré burſt out into a loud laugh, which they ſeem unable to ſuppreſs, but endeavour to hide.)*

M. Du. How now?—

Mart. Really, madam, 'tis mademoiſelle Joſepha who makes us laugh—

Joſ. Nay, 'twas you who began.

Mart. I?—I did not ſay a word.

M. Du. Your mirth does not diſpleaſe me, provided the work goes on as it ſhould do; beſides, ſome allowance ought to be made for youth; but what I expreſsly forbid is ſecrets and whiſpering. You ſhould all look upon me as a mother, and would do wrong to conceal any thing from my knowledge.

Ida. For that matter, we ſhould be very ungrateful if we did not love you moſt ſincerely, madam—I, in particular!— *[She ſighs.*

M. Du. I have no deſire but your welfare, that's certain. *(After a ſilence.)* Well, 'tis ſeven o'clock, I muſt go out.—Juſtina, fetch my cloak.

Juſ. (Riſing.) Are you going by yourſelf, madam?

M. Du. Yes; to madame de Clémont's.

[Juſtina leaves the ſhop.

Mart. Madame de Clémont, who lives in Richlieu ſtreet?

M. Du. Yes.

Juf. I have been there twice; madame de Clémont, though not young, is a very agreeable lady.

M. Du. Aye, indeed is she. I had the honour of being her servant fifteen years, I know her perfectly.—All my success in life is owing to her; she was the cause of my marriage, she set me up in business, and brought me into fashion: therefore, there is nothing in the world I would not do for her.

Anne. That's very natural.

Juf. Is not she the Marchioness de Linçé's mother?

M. Du. Yes.

Juf. How handsome the Marchioness is!

Mart. And so good!

Jul. Did I never see her?

Mart. No, because she has been in the country for these three months past.

Juf. (*Returning, and speaking to madame Dupré.*) Here are your cloak and gloves, madam. What band-box will you carry?

Mr Du. (*Rising.*) None at all. Madame de Clémont does not buy millenery now; she has left that off.

Juf. But the Baroness d'Elfac is quite as old, and she loves it!—

M. Du. Yes, because the one is sensible, and the other weak.—Well though, your servant, for it grows late.—Good b'ye, girls, mind your work. Justina, is my mother above-stairs?

Juf. Yes, madam.

M. Du. Is Mandlin with her?

Juf. Yes, madam.

M. Du. Very well, that's right. I am going, but I shall return in an hour. [*She goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

JUSTINA, *who seats herself in Madame Dupré's place*; ANNE, MARTHA, JOSEPHA, ISABELLA.

Anne. WHAT care she takes of her mother!

Juſ. She would lay down her life for her mother's ſake.

Iſa. Madame Moreau too is a very good woman.

Anne. (*To Iſabella.*) You have been here only three weeks, but when you know more of her, you will love her an hundred times better than you do now. She is as worthy, as charitable, as pious as her daughter, and that's ſaying every thing.

Iſa. Do tell me, mademoiſelle Anne, why ſhe almoſt conſtantly wears *jackets*, and never puts on a trimmed gown?

Anne. Becauſe ſhe was only a poor labouring woman, till madame Dupré got up in the world.

Iſa. Oh, that's the reaſon of her ſpeaking a little like the country folks.

Anne. To be ſure—

Juſ. As ſoon as madame Dupré was able, ſhe took her mother from the village where ſhe lived, and brought her hither.

Iſa. (*Sighing.*) It is a great bleſſing to be able to make a mother happy!

Juſ. Yes, the bare hope alone gives one ſpirits to work. [*A long ſilence.*

Joſ. To-morrow's a holiday; I'm glad of it.

Mart. Aye, after ſervice we'll take a walk.

Joſ.

Juſ. Oh, I ſhall have a much greater pleaſure than that.

Mart. What is it?

Joſ. Why madame Dupré has lent me a book which is ſo pretty! ſo entertaining!—

Juſ. Pamela, I dare ſay?

Joſ. The very ſame.

Juſ. She made me read it twice over; and many a tear it has coſt me.

Mart. I have read it too.

Juſ. It was given to madame Dupré, formerly, when ſhe was young, by madame de Clémont.

Mart. Is it called a novel?

Juſ. Yes; and madame Dupré ſays, it is the only novel which girls in our ſtation ought to read; all the reſt are bad, eſpecially for us.

Anne. I remember ſhe once ſcolded at me very much for reading Hyppolito, Earl of Douglaſs—and ſhe was right, for 'tis made up of nothing but ſilly love-tales—whereas, in Pamela, there are ſuch pretty, ſuch affecting ſtories!—

Juſ. Pamela is ſo virtuous, ſo fond of her father and mother!—

Joſ. 'Tis impoſſible to read the book without wiſhing to be like her.

Iſa. Oh, do lend it to me, mademoiſelle Joſepha!

Joſ. Yes, that I will.

Iſa. Mademoiſelle Juſtina, I hear madame Dupré gives a dance at carnival time, and I've always been wiſhing to aſk you about it—(Ah, my needle's broke!) Is it true?

Juſ. Very true. Though madame Dupré requires diligence, ſhe gives us amuſements.

Mart. Aye, indeed; for on Shrove Monday and Tueſday ſhe invites her acquaintance, and makes us all dance from five o'clock till ten.

Isa. Pray how long is it to Shrove Tuesday?

Jos. Alas! still five weeks.

Isa. That's a great while.

Jos. (*Rising and coming from behind the counter.*) I must walk about a little; my feet are quite benumbed with cold.

Isa. (*Rising.*) And so must I too.

Anne. (*To Justina.*) Justina, did not you go to the Baroness d'Elsac's this morning?

Jus. Yes, and Josepha went with me.

Jos. Gracious! how that madame d'Elsac does trifle! She kept us daudling above two hours. She's an oddity, an old coquette!—I would not be bound to wait upon her, however—

Isa. Was she dressing?

Jos. Yes, she was before the glass, looking at herself with a dissatisfied air; and I believe 'twas the glass which put her out of temper, for she is not more fractious at any time, than when going to have her hair dressed.—She grumbled worse than ever!—and made such a piece of work at her valet-de-chambre, at her women—she scared them all so, that it quite raised one's pity.—'Twas, "How unhandy you are!—How awkward you are!"—She could say nothing better to any of them; and then her tone was so harsh, her eyes looked so furious!—Oh, she's a sad lady!

Isa. Did she buy any millenery?

Jos. Yes, our whole box full; but to see her manner!—and how she turned up her nose, and assumed such an air of indifference, as much as to say, she had no mind for any thing.—(*She, mimicks her.*) "Mademoiselle, what's the price of this?"—Two guineas, madam.—"'Tis frightful!—hideous!—such taste!—so whimsical!"

[*All the girls laugh, except Justina.*

Isa.

Isa. (*Still laughing.*) Did she make all more grimaces?

Mart. Yes, I'm sure of that; 'tis exactly like her.

Jos. And then she constantly buys things, notwithstanding her crabbed looks, for they are only put on that she may appear heedless and unconcerned, and in order to make believe that she no longer cares about dress; because, in her heart, she very well knows 'tis ridiculous, at her age, to be so much engrossed by it: but the drollest thing is, when one takes out some ornament plainly too youthful for her; oh, then 'tis a perfect comedy!—"Fie, fie, (says she) who can wear that? How fantastical!—What vile taste!—'tis vulgar in the extreme!" [*The girls laugh again.*

Jus. Come, Josepha, tell me now; if madame Dupré were here, would you relate all these stories?

Jos. They are not stories; I invent nothing.

Jus. But is it pretty to make game in this manner of any one, and especially of persons who are entitled to respect?—You say, you invent nothing, that's a great merit truly; and pray then, don't you think slander a fault?

Anne. Justina is right, and we were wrong in laughing.

Jus. (*To Josepha.*) I speak out of friendship to you, Josepha.

Jos. Therefore, I will profit by it, dear Justina. (*She embraces her.*) Don't be angry; consider, you are older than I am; you have lived a great while with madame Dupré, 'tis natural that you should be prudent and sensible; but, I promise you, I will slander nobody in future.—Well, I shall get to work again. Come, Isabella.

[*They resume their seats.*

Isa.

Isa. What's madame Dupré's reason for never sending me about the town, mademoiselle Justina.

Jus. Because you are only fourteen.

Isa. Why Josepha is but fifteen—.

Jos. Therefore, I never go out by myself—indeed, none of us do, except Anne and Justina, and they go very seldom.

Isa. But I could accompany somebody else.

Jos. No doubt of it; however, in general, madame Dupré does not like that such girls as we are should go out very often.

Isa. Yet, I should so like to see ladies at their toilettes.—Hah! there's a coach stops at the door.

Jus. Anne, go and see whose it is. (*Anne gets up, opens the door, and returns laughing.*) Well?

Anne. (*Laughing.*) 'Tis—

Jus. Who?

Anne. Why, madame d'Elsac—

[*All the girls laugh.*

Isa. What, the lady whom Josepha has just been mimicking?

Jos. The very same.

Jus. Come, come, no giggling—

Mart. Oh, never fear.

Jos. (*In a low voice to Isabella.*) Put on a grave face.

Isa. (*In a low voice.*) I can't, I declare.

Jos. (*In a low voice.*) Nor I—let us seem as if we were blowing our noses.

[*They take out their pocket-handkerchiefs.*

Jus. Here she comes. [*All the girls rise.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

THE BARONESS, *followed by her ſervants, who remain at the further end of the ſtage*; JUSTINA, ANNE, MARTHA, JOSEPHA, ISABELLA.

Bar. WHERE'S Madame Dupré?

Juſ. Gone out, madam.

Bar. And is my gown trimmed?

Juſ. You did not order it till Monday, madam.

Bar. I abſolutely muſt have it to-morrow.

Juſ. That's impoſſible.

Bar. Impoſſible!——you need only ſit up all night—

Juſ. We never work all night on the eve of feſtivals, madam, becauſe of attending divine ſervice next day—

Bar. Oh, you won't work all night—that's another affair—

Juſ. Excuſe me, madam, I have the honour to tell you—

Bar. Go and fetch my gown, mademoiſelle; I ſhall take it away with me. [*Juſtina leaves the ſhop.*

Anne. The petticoat is quite trimmed, and has the prettieſt effect—

Bar. It is not that I care about it; I pay no great attention to ſuch things—but I like to have my orders obeyed with alacrity.

Anne. If you had ſaid at firſt that you wiſhed for the gown to-morrow, madam, every thing elſe ſhould have been laid aſide—

Bar.

Bar. Shew me some caps.

[*Anne and Martha rise and fetch band-boxes.*

Jos. Will you please to have a chair, madam?

Bar. No; I don't intend to make any long stay here.

Jos. (*Aside.*) She won't go this hour, I'll be bound for it.

[*Anne and Martha bring a band-box to the Baroness.*

Bar. All this is mighty vulgar.

Anne. These two are elegant.

Bar. Aye, when held so, on the hand; but either of them, on the hair, would be frightful.

Mart. (*Aside.*) I really think they would, with such a face as that.

Bar. Well, I'll take them.—Have you any hats ready made?

Anne. Yes, madam.

Bar. They must be quite plain, and without affectation; indeed, no other kind is pretty.

Jos. Will you please, madam, to see one which is bespoke at six guineas?

Bar. Six guineas for a hat!—it must be a curiosity.—How can any body spend six guineas on a hat! What extreme folly!

Jos. And yet you have a very noble spirit yourself, madam; for we had the honour of making you a *Conti* in blond, about a fort night ago, which cost seven guineas.—Here is the hat. (*She shews her a hat trimmed with feathers and flowers.*)

Bar. 'Tis frightful!—(*The girls turn aside and laugh.*) Who is it for?

Jos. For the Marchioness de Lincé.

Bar. How foolish!

Jos. Oh, it was not ordered by the Marchioness, but by her father-in-law.—She does not like high-priced

priced millenery; nor has she any need of it, she is so young and handsome!—

Bar. (*Very servilely.*) Carry away the hat, and the other things too; they are all frightful. I can't guess why I deal at this shop; mademoiselle Maillard's is the only place for tasty things.

Anne. Oh, here comes Justina. (*Justina returns with the petticoat of a full-trimmed gown.*)

Bar. Let's see; bring that hither.—Well, I don't dislike it; 'tis really done with tolerable taste.

Jus. You desired, madam, to have it made as handsome as possible in blond.

Bar. It looks very well, very rich.—What a difference there is between this, and a gown trimmed with flowers!——You will put on some tassels?

Jus. Yes, madam.

Bar. I gave you the pattern.

Jus. They are done already.

Bar. (*Looking at her petticoat.*) I think there ought to be bows in these vacancies.

Jus. Very well, madam, we will put some on.

Bar. But of what colour?

Jus. White?—

Bar. No, it would not be distinguished from the blond—but blush-colour?—

Jus. That will be very pretty.

Jos. (*Aside, shrugging up her shoulders.*) To wear a gown trimmed with pink ribbands at five and forty!—

Bar. I like none but lively colours; I abominate the *prune de Monsieur*, and the *puce*—

Jus. I hear another carriage stop.

[*She goes to see whose it is.*

Bar.

Bar. (*Still looking at her petticoat.*) When the taſſels and bows are put on, it really will be charming.

Juſ. (*Returning.*) Oh, mademoiſelle Juſtina, here's the Marchioneſs de Lincé!

Juſ. (*Laying the petticoat upon the counter.*) Indeed! — how glad I am! [*She runs to the door.*

Bar. Hey-day, what tranſports!—Do be pleaſed, ladies, to take my petticoat up-ſtairs; and don't let my gown be ſeen by any body.—Come, where are my ſervants?

[*As ſhe is going out the Marchioneſs appears.*

SCENE IV.

THE BARONESS, THE MARCHIONESS, JUSTINA, ANNE, MARTHA, JOSEPHA, ISABELLA.

Bar. (*To the Marchioneſs.*) SO, madam, at laſt you are returned!—May I take the liberty of aſking when you came back?

Mar. We came this evening—

Bar. And one of your firſt cares is to viſit madame Dupré; that indeed ſeems to me quite natural; to be ſure, at your age—I think you are rather thin—

Mar. I may perhaps be altered, but I am perfectly well.

Bar. I flatter myſelf we ſhall ſup together on Monday, at madame de Clémont's.

Mar. No, I ſhall not have that honour; I go away to-morrow for three weeks.

Bar.

Bar. What, ſo ſoon!—Well, I'll leave you, madam; for you certainly muſt have a great deal of buſineſs here—

Mar. But don't I interrupt your buſineſs, madam?

Bar. I only dropped in by chance, as you may eaſily imagine.

Joſ. (*To the Baroneſs.*) Did not you ſay you would carry back your gown, madam?

Bar. (*Bluntly*) No, keep it.

Joſ. (*Taking the petticoat off the counter.*) This petticoat muſt be taken off the counter.

Mar. (*Looking at the petticoat.*) How pretty that is!

Joſ. The vacancies are to be filled up with bluſh-coloured ribbands.

Mar. And is this gown for the Baroneſs?

Bar. Perhaps you think it rather too youthful for me; but 'tis a fancy of madame Dupré's.

Mar. (*Still looking at the petticoat.*) 'Tis a mighty gay fancy.

Joſ. (*Aſide.*) And even laughable.

Bar. Your ſervant, madam; the honour of meeting you has delighted me: but pray take care of your health, that you may return to us with the ſame lovely bloom you uſed to have.

Mar. (*Smiling.*) How little ought we to prize an ornament of which three months may bereave us!

Bar. But health is ſo precious a thing!—Mademoiſelle, let madame Dupré know that I would have her come and ſpeak with me to-morrow. Madam, your moſt obedient. [*She goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

THE MARCHIONESS, *and the girls, who all flock round her.*

Juſ. WHAT could make her think the Marchioneſs altered?

Juſ. She had a great mind to ſay the Marchioneſs was grown homely, I can tell you that.

Mar. My dear Juſtina, I ſhould have been very glad to have ſeen madame Dupré; for I want a maid, and wiſh to take one whom ſhe can recommend; madame Dupré is ſo worthy!—How does ſhe do?

Juſ. Perfectly well, madam, thank God.—She is gone to madame de Clémont's.

Mar. To my mother's?—That muſt be on my buſineſs. However, I have ſomething elſe to mention. I have brought out of the country with me a poor little village-girl who has, I believe, five or ſix brothers, and I could wiſh madame Dupré to take her.

Juſ. That ſhe may learn the faſhions?

Mar. Yes. She is but fourteen, and very pretty, good-natured, and modeſt. She ſhed ſo many tears on leaving her father and mother!—poor girl, ſhe is truly intereſting: in this houſe I am ſure ſhe would preſerve her piety, goodneſs of heart, and purity of morals; therefore, madame Dupré will do me a real ſervice by taking charge of her.

Juſ. Undoubtedly ſhe will do it with pleaſure; ſhe is ſo much devoted to you, madam!—you, whom

whom she has known from infancy, and to whom she owes every thing!—

Mar. I have a sincere regard for her; and her worthy mother, how is she?

Jus. Perfectly well.

Mar. (*Looking at Isabella.*) I don't know that young woman.

Isa. (*Curtseying.*) I have only been here three weeks, madam.

Jus. Ah, madam, she is a lovely girl!—Her mother takes in plain-work, and, though employed only by the common people, made shift to live, till she had the misfortune to be seized with a lingering illness which reduced her to the greatest distress: upon that, this young woman hired herself to a tradesman's wife in our neighbourhood, as a servant of all work, and daily carried her own dinner and supper to her mother; then, when her mother grew worse, she sat up with her o'nights, never bragging about it, so that it was not known for some time. The poor girl grew as thin as a lath, but made no complaints, and always did her work; till at last, madame Dupré, upon learning the whole story, took charge of her, and treats her like a child of her own.

Mar. (*Looking at Isabella.*) Delightful girl!—Come hither, my dear Isabella.—I think her enchanting, especially since I have heard this story.—Embrace me, my dear. (*She embraces Isabella, who kisses her hand.*) *A servant of all work!*—with that delicate appearance.—What strength and what virtues spring from goodness of heart!—Is your mother's health re-established?

Isa. Yes, madam, thank God; and she is now able to work again. She was forced to sell the few goods she had; but madame Dupré replaced

 them,

them, and even added a fine walnut-tree cheſt of drawers; my mother is quite happy now.

Mar. Worthy madame Dupré!—how much you ought to love her!

Iſa. Yes indeed, madam.

Mar. You ſhould prove it by a ſtrict obſervance of her advice, and by a diligent attention to your buſineſs. (*She takes a purſe out of her pocket, and preſents it to Iſabella.*) Here, my love; I fancy you will be very glad to give this to your mother: madame Dupré will approve your accepting this ſlight mark of my regard. [*She embraces her again.*

Iſa. Oh, madam, I am confounded—

Juſ. (*In a low voice to Anne.*) What a charming young lady!

Mar. Juſtina, I deſire you will not forget my meſſage to madame Dupré, about the little country girl. My dears, I recommend her to you all.

Juſ. Oh, madam, we ſhall love her, as if ſhe were our ſiſter!

Mar. Well, I depend upon it; and I truſt you will make my little Jane as obliging and as amiable as yourſelves. Good bye, Juſtina; good bye, Iſabella—

Iſa. I would thank you, madam—but I have not power—my heart is ſo full!—

Mar. Never mention that ſubject, my dear.—Your ſervant; I charge you to tell Madame Dupré that her kindneſs to you makes me love her more than ever. She has done a truly good action, which ought to inſpire you with endleſs gratitude.

[*She goes out, and all the girls follow her to the door.*

SCENE

SCENE VI.

JUSTINA, ANNE, MARTHA, JOSEPHA, ISABELLA.

Just. WELL, can the whole world produce a more charming young lady than this?

All at once. No, indeed.

Isa. (*To Justina.*) Look, mademoiselle, see what she has given me. [*She gives her the purse.*

Just. (*After having counted the money.*) Ten guineas!—

Isa. My poor mother!—Oh, mademoiselle Justina, I do long to carry this to my mother directly, though it is late—

Just. That's right: Anne, will you go with her?

Anne. Aye, with all my heart; I am ready.

Isa. Dear mademoiselle Anne, how kind you are!—but won't madame Dupré be angry?

Just. (*To Isabella.*) No, no, I will answer for that.

Jos. (*To Isabella.*) Besides, that your day's work may be finished, I'll help you when you come back, and we'll sit up an hour later to get it done.

Mar. And I'll help her too, for I've finished my cap.

Just. Go then, Isabella.

Isa. I kindly thank you all; and, believe me, you do not oblige an ungrateful person.

Anne. Come, my dear friend.

[*She gives her arm to Isabella.*

Jos. (*To Isabella.*) Stay till I have embraced you—for I rejoice as much in your good fortune,

as if it were my own. Away, loſe no more time; go as faſt as you can.

[*Iſabella and Anne go out.*

SCENE VII.

JUSTINA, MARTHA, JOSEPHA.

(*They reſume their work.*)

Juſ. POOR Iſabella, ſhe really deſerves to be happy.

Joſ. Yes, indeed, for ſhe is ſo good!—

Mart. And then ſhe looks ſo modeſt!——A young nobleman came to our ſhop the other day—

Joſ. Aye, to buy flowers—

Mart. The ſame: well, he was mightily taken with Iſabella, I ſaw that—

Joſ. So did I; he kept dangle, dangle, on our ſide to ſtare at her; then he ſaid ſhe was a pretty looking girl, and that ſhe had the fineſt eyes!—Iſabella turned a deaf ear to all this, and held her head, as I do now, bent over her work; ſo he was nicely caught, for he had no opportunity of mentioning her eyes again, becauſe they were caſt down—but he ſtuck to his text, and fell to praiſing her *eye-lids*.—I would be glad to know if it ever came into any body's head to mind *eye-lids* before!—For my part, I had ſuch an inclination to laugh, that it almoſt killed me.—But as for Iſabella, at whom all this was aimed, ſhe appeared as deaf as a poſt, and put on ſuch a glum look, that

that the gentleman marched away like a downright fool, quite out of countenance.

Jus. And every girl ought to conduct herself in this manner, or she will incur the contempt of those very persons who tell her such idle stories.—But let us talk of the Matchioness de Lincé; how I love her!—

Jos. Why, is not every lady's behaviour like hers? I can't understand it, not I; for 'tis said, they all wish to please, and to be loved; well, they need only be unaffected, obliging, affable, and compassionate—this is a sure way to succeed with the whole world—and, in truth, if people have not such recommendations, they are never liked by any body—to wish to be loved without goodness, why 'tis out of all reason.

Jus. Somebody knocks—

Jos. I'll go to the door.

[*She rises and goes to the door.*

Jus. Perhaps, 'tis madame Dupré.

Jos. (*Returning.*) 'Tis an old English lady of quality, who seems just landed by the terrible gibberish she talks; she desires to have some millenery carried to her coach-side. I will take a parcel of old shop-keepers, which lie there in a band-box, and she will purchase them as readily as if they were all in the newest fashion.

Jus. Fie, fie, Josepha; would you deceive the lady because she is a foreigner? Are not the smallest frauds, even in the most trifling things, always contrary to honesty? Besides, by such conduct you would even hurt the true interest of madame Dupré; for a dishonest trader is soon punished by the loss of reputation, of credit, and of customers.

Juſ. Your reaſoning is as clear as the day; nobody ſhall catch me at any more attempts to impoſe; I am cured of that, however; but ſtill, I ſhall ſell rather dearer to the Engliſh lady, than to our conſtant cuſtomers.

Juſ. We ſhould never exact; but you know very well, there is always a difference made between ſtrangers and conſtant cuſtomers.

Joſepha takes up a band-box and goes out.

Mart. Yet ſome cuſtomers don't deſerve this conſideration, they pay ſo ill.

Juſ. Therefore, when that's known, they are charged higher, which is but equitable; however, there are bounds which conſcience will not ſuffer us to paſs; and, as madame Dupré ſays, nothing can juſtify ſhop-keepers turning uſurers.

Mart. I think I hear madame Dupré's voice.

Juſ. Yes, ſhe is talking to Joſepha.

Mart. Oh, here they are.

SCENE VIII.

MADAME DUPRE, JUSTINA, MARTHA, JOSEPHA.

M. Du. COME, Joſepha, ſhut up the ſhop, 'tis nine o'clock—

Juſ. Have you heard about Iſabella, madam?

M. Du. Yes, from Joſepha, whom I found at the door, by a lady's coach. The Marchioneſs de Lince's generoſity does not ſurprize me, for I know a thouſand inſtances of the like in her. But go up ſtairs now, young people, and wait ſupper till Anne and Iſabella return, meanwhile

I will talk with Justina, having something to tell her. Go. *Josepha and Martha leave the shop.*

SCENE IX. and last.

MADAME DUPRE, JUSTINA.

M. Du. YOU know I have just been with madame de Clemont, who desires I will look out for a maid to wait upon the Marchioness de Lince; she wants a worthy person, in short, a girl for whom I can answer, and I have cast my eyes on you, dear Justina—

Jus. What, madam, can I leave you, after all the obligations you have conferred upon me? There is no advantage which I would purchase at such a price.

M. Du. By parting with you, my dear, I certainly make a great sacrifice; but madame de Clémont is my benefactress, and I think myself particularly happy in being able to give her this proof of attachment; therefore, as a favour, I desire your consent.

Jus. To be sure I will do any thing you please to order, madam; and yet—

M. Du. In the Marchioness de Lince you will have a mistress who is good, amiable—

Jus. I know that, madam; and were it not for my grief at leaving you, should certainly engage in her service with the utmost joy.

M. Du. She goes away to-morrow, and you must accompany her, Justina; madame de Clémont is extremely desirous of it, and I have promised for you.

Jus. What, so soon?

M. Du. Yes, my dear; when once we resolve upon a thing, we should do it with as good a grace as possible.

Jus. But I am intirely unacquainted with the duties of a lady's woman, madam; neither do I know how to conduct myself in a large family.

M. Du. Be civil to every servant, but familiar with none, and you will obtain the regard of all. You will have a companion, shew her great attention, but do not form an intimacy with her, till long acquaintance has convinced you that she is as worthy as yourself.

Jus. But if she is ill-disposed, if she is envious?—

M. Du. You will not make her your friend, and, by strictly discharging your duty, can have nothing to fear from her.

Jus. Yet, if she should misrepresent me to my mistress?—

M. Du. Our principals, who have the advantage over us in education, are, generally speaking, from that cause, superiour to us in understanding likewise, and can clearly discern the motives of our actions: besides, it requires no great degree of penetration to distinguish malice from zeal: the envious are continually betraying themselves, and will be seen through at first sight, by every person who has the least acuteness.

Jus. I am sure of one great comfort, that madame de Lincé is goodness itself, that she has no whims, no ill-humour—

M. Du. There never was a perfect human creature; you must expect that: when we find equity and goodness of heart in a mistress, every thing else should be endured without reluctance.

Jus.

Jul. Do you think madame de Linée has faults?

M. Du. I perceive none; I only know that we cannot fail to find defects in any person whom we see daily, and especially in those who are neither interested in pleasing us, nor obliged to constrain themselves before us. Then, has not a lady her private grievances? Can she at all times preserve an equality of temper? She will often be hasty from absence of mind, and because her thoughts are taken up with business; and we may accuse her of caprice, when she is in distress. You must have patience, and say to yourself, if you see your lady out of humour; "Perhaps she is ill, or tormented by secret sorrow!"—and then, Justina, instead of being soured by a hasty expression, or a harsh word, you will pity her, and feel for her more than ever.

Jul. But how must I behave in order to please my mistress and gain her affection?

M. Du. Attach yourself sincerely to her: if you love her, she will love you; and this is the only method that ensures success; do not take any other; for, if you did, you would deceive yourself. Is it not natural to love the person who provides us with a maintenance, who attends to our happiness and our little concerns, who protects our relations, and desires nothing but our good; in short, the person who will take care of, and support us in old age, if we are faithful servants?—The grievances which servants experience arise from exaggerating their masters faults, and not thinking enough of their virtues, from being too sensible of their insults, and not sufficiently grateful for their favours. What is the consequence of this? That they have

no attachment to their masters, and therefore are not beloved by them. When service does not spring from affection, 'tis no better than slavery; and those duties which seem hard and painful are never above half discharged.

Yar. Oh, I shall love my mistress most sincerely, I am very sure of that.

M. Du. Then you will be perfectly happy; and I exhort you, my dear Justina, (whatsoever liberties your lady may allow you to take) never to deviate from the most profound respect in your behaviour towards her. We are right only in our proper place; if we quit that, we are compelled to resume it, and this alone is truly mortifying and grievous! In short, I would never have you mention your mistress before any body, but to speak well of her: you should conceal her defects, and pride yourself in her good qualities. When I lived with madame de Clemont, I remember I was more proud of hearing her praised, than if I had been commended myself. While I was in her family I considered it as my own; her interest was mine; and so far from thinking how to draw presents from her, my whole attention was employed in trying to save her money. I lived on good terms with my fellow-servants, and never had a dispute with any body; but, if I saw a servant misbehave and wrong my mistress, after full conviction (for we should not suspect hastily) I did not hesitate to acquaint her with it. By this mode of conduct, I may boast of having rendered essential service to madame de Clemont, during the fifteen years I lived with her, and of having established excellent order in her house; and I am amply rewarded for it, in the first place, by the testimony of my conscience, and in the next, by

the numberless favours, which that kind mistress has heaped upon me. I had for a companion, a covetous, selfish girl, who only thought of getting presents and hoarding up her profits; and who, when she left madame de Clemont, was worth abundance of gowns and linen, together with near two hundred pounds in money, which she had acquired at the expence of honesty; and having by these means paid herself, she received no further recompence; but has lost by little pilferings (which will not supply her with bread) both her character, and an annuity: while I, who amassed nothing, have had my fortune made in a degree beyond all my hopes. From hence it follows, Justina, that interest alone, independent of religion and virtue, should determine us to act with integrity. Lay it down as a standing rule, that masters are competent judges of their servants; that although they sometimes have the weakness to wink at knavery, they never reward it; and that all the profits which may be gained, nay, all the thefts which may be committed, during a fifteen years residence in one house, are not equivalent to the provision which a good master constantly makes for a sincerely affectionate servant.

Jus. I listen to you, madam, with equal pleasure and attention; for this reasoning is so clear as not to be above my capacity; besides, I think self-approbation and a good character are, in every class of life, worth all the riches in the universe.

M. Du. Cherish these virtuous sentiments, my dear girl; always remain pious and good; prefer honour to every thing, and, then, even in your humble station, you will claim respect and receive it; nay, fortune will seek you out and prevent

your wishes. But let us now go up stairs and join my mother, who will rejoice to hear these particulars; for she is as much attached to madame de Clémont's family as I am. Come, my dear.

[*She takes her by the arm, and they both go away.*

THE

Persons of the Drama.

Madame Durocher, *a linen-draper.*

Silvia, *her daughter.*

Ellen, *a young apprentice.*

Georgina, *a shop-girl.*

Madame Bertrand, *the mistress of a mercer's shop, and niece to Madame Durocher.*

Gogo, *Madame Bertrand's daughter, six years of age.*

Catherine, *Madame Durocher's servant.*

The Countess d'Olsey.

The Scene, Madame Durocher's house at Paris.

THE LINEN DRAPER.

Le plus beau droit des vertus malheureuſes,
Eſt la faveur des ames généreuſes.

N. E. Regnard.

The ſofteſt balm afflicted virtue finds
Is the benignant ſmile of generous minds.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The Stage repreſents a Chamber.

ELLEN, *alone; holding a gold box, a purſe full of money, and a note.*

ALAS! what ſhall I do?—How was it poſſible that any body could get into my chamber, and put this box, this money, and this note upon my table, without being ſeen by one of the family?—Catherine would not yield to temptation,

tion, she is an honest girl.—I can suspect nobody but Joseph, the little scullion.—I need not read the letter; I too well know from whence the whole comes!—Infamous presents!—and this very Marquis d'Olsey is my father's colonel! my poor father! how shall I extricate him?—Who would have thought I should shed so many tears on hearing news of my father? Oh, how happy should I be, if I could see him, if I could embrace him!—But secrecy is requisite—his safety, nay, his life depends on my discretion. Good heaven!—and that wicked Marquis is his colonel! yet, in this perplexity, I cannot impart my secret to madame Durocher.—Hah, there is somebody coming; let me instantly conceal the box and money. [*She puts them both into her pocket.*

SCENE II.

ELLEN, CATHERINE.

Cath. MADEMOISELLE Ellen—I was seeking after you.—But, alack, how red your eyes are! I'd lay a wager you've been crying.

Ell. No, Catherine, I assure you.—But tell me, have you sold my clothes?

Cath. Not yet. Why, lookye, if I must own the truth, suspicions have got into my head—nay, indeed, scruples.—For a young girl like you, to be selling all her clothes at this rate, in such a hugger-mugger way, has no very good appearance—

Ell. But did not I tell you, Catherine, that I had an old aunt in Burgundy, who, being reduced to great distress, got somebody to write and

beg assistance from me; and that I wished to sell my clothes in order to relieve her.

Cath. Aye, aye, you did talk about an old aunt. What the deuce, sell one's clothes for the sake of *an old aunt*—that's a good one truly: if 'twas for father or mother now, I'd believe it fair enough; but you are an orphan, we know that, and this *old aunt*, who is just come to light, puts me in a quandary.

Ell. Don't you remember I received a letter yesterday?

Cath. Yes, I caught you a reading it, and crying sadly.

Ell. Well, that letter came from my poor aunt.

Cath. Now if, instead of this, 'twas a love-letter.—Marry, pardon me—you are only fifteen, and so pretty!—

Ell. (*Taking a letter out of her pocket.*) Here, look at this, Catherine; has it the appearance of a love letter?—You can't read, but you may see how coarse and dirty the paper is.

Cath. (*Looking at the letter.*) No, there's only one fine gentleman that I suspect, and he certainly would not write on such paper as this. Oh, love-letters have another guess look. First, the paper should be gilt; then they are such little tiny things!—Marry, I have seen some myself!—I lived with an advocate's widow who had them by wholesale; she was not pretty, like you, but she was rich, and that's all one.

Ell. You must undoubtedly remember that it was this very letter which I held in my hand yesterday when you entered my room.

Cath. Yes, I know it again; 'twas that scrawl which set you a crying, sure enough; and I grant you,

you, there certainly an't no more love in that, than in one of my eyes. I can now the readier believe your story about this old aunt, 'cause for these two years past, during which you have been 'prentice here, I never caught you out in the smallest fib.—But what makes you with to conceal this story from our mistress, madame Durocher?

Ell. I repeat to you, 'tis a fear lest she should be against the sale of my clothes—

Cath. But she is so good!—

Ell. Undoubtedly; and she would offer to advance me money—

Cath. Aye, 'cause that lady who educated you and placed you here, would repay her.

Ell. This is what I wish to avoid: I am already under so many obligations to the lady you speak of, that I should blush at folliciting new favours; it is much more easy to part with clothes which I can do extremely well without, and indeed never wore.

Cath. But you have kept nothing save the gown on your back—

Ell. Yes, yes, I have got another besides.

Cath. Was I in your place, I would write to this lady about your aunt, and she would some how help her out—

Ell. What, you forget that this lady is on her travels, that she is in Italy? (*Aside.*) Alas! why is she not here? she would have protected me!

Cath. Italy!—then that's a great way off?

Ell. I could not receive an answer in less than a month.

Cath. Dear me! And what the deuce makes people go to such an out-of-the-way country as that?

Ell.

Ell. However, dear Catherine, you have promised to sell my clothes—

Cath. Aye, I'll go to the old clothes-shop presently, I have told you so.—I see plain enough that you are doing a good action, but, howsomever, this secrecy vexes me.

Ell. To-morrow you may speak of the affair, and I shall avow it myself to madame Durocher—

Cath. To-morrow?

Ell. Yes; I only desire you to be discreet till then.

Cath. Well, I won't say one single word, you may depend upon that. But now I think on't, mademoiselle Ellen, let's have some talk about the fine gentleman who eyed you so last Sunday at mass.—Do you know he came to the shop this morning? Madame Durocher was out, and I kept house while you was at church: so, as I stood trifling in the parlour, behold, a cabriole stopped at the door, and then in I saw this fine gentleman come. Marry, I was quite stounded! so he stalks up to me, humming and hawing, and asks for madame Durocher.—"She's gone to church sir, (says I) 'tis a holiday to-day."—Upon that he begun saying as how he wanted to buy dimity and laces.—All the time while he talked, his eyes was first on one side, then on the other, in search of you, I'd be bound for't.—So, to see what he would say, I called Joseph, who came running. "Joseph, (says I) is mademoiselle Ellen gone out that you knows of?"—"Yes, mademoiselle Catherine," says he.—"Aye, I'm sorry for it, (says I) 'cause she could have told the gentleman how much striped dimity we have, and for my part I can't say. Zooks, the moment he heard your name,

he was all the colours of the rain-bow; I pretended not to mind it, and so he asked me all about you, and then, at last, took himself off.

Ell. You were much to blame, Catherine, for mentioning me and answering his questions.

Cath. 'Twas only to see how he would look, for I do assure you I heartily detest them there wicked men who want to wheedle young girls—and now that I know his bad designs, I promise you, if he applies again to me, I'll send him away with a flea in his ear.—Oh, I forgot to tell you, but, at going, he offered me a guinea, which I refused point blank, 'cause I had done nothing to deserve it; and so it seemed as if 'twas meant to bribe me for the sake of you.—Oh, that thought touched me to the quick!—I'm sure I coloured up to my very ears—

Ell. It was he who should have coloured, if he had a wicked intention.

Cath. True; and he may be as great a man as he will, but poor Catherine, at that moment, was greater than he.

Ell. However, he shall know, Catherine, that persons in our station may have sentiments more exalted than in his—

Cath. You are very good, mademoiselle, in saying to me, *our station*; for you was educated neither better nor worse than a lady; you know how to read and write, your head is filled with fine things, and I can't tell how many books. Oh, there's a difference between you and me, and a very great difference!

Ell. True, indeed, my dear benefactress has given me an education much superiour to my rank; but that does not make me less the daughter of a poor peasant.

Cath.

Cath. Still, 'tis good in you to remember this; there are so many who forget it!—But let me make an end of my story though: I know the gentleman's name; 'tis the Marquis d'Olfey, and he lives hard-by, with his mother, the Countess d'Olfey—

Ell. Has he a mother?

Cath. Yes, indeed; and a worthy lady into the bargain.

Ell. How did you learn all this?

Cath. From Joseph—he's as sharp a lad as ever drawed breath, and knows but every thing.

Ell. (*Aside.*) He has a mother!—A thought strikes me. [*She muses.*

Cath. I believe I hear madame Durocher and mademoiselle Silvia—

Ell. Catherine, dear Catherine, remember my clothes!—but, alas! to-day is a holiday—

Cath. That signifies nothing; since 'tis to do a good action, the woman I told you of, at the old clothes-shop, will buy them; I'll manage that matter, she is an acquaintance of mine, and will even give a fair price; so be easy. An't our mistress's daughter in the secret?

Ell. Mademoiselle Silvia? No, certainly.

Cath. Yet she is very fond of you.

Ell. Therefore I ought not to tell her; because she might, perhaps, be desirous of getting her mother to advance me money.

Cath. Zooks, why you've a good reason for borrowing.—And Georgina, the shop-girl, knows nothing of it neither?

Ell. Not a word.

Cath. I'm very glad to hear that, for she's no vast favourite of mine; howsomever, may all the harm I wish her light on myself; but yet she has a slan-

a ſlanderous tongue, ſhe's a ſhuffler; take care ſhe don't trump up ſome tale againſt you, to madame Durocher; I oftentimes hear her drop words which carry two meanings; I warn you of it.—Ah, ſhe's a ſpiteful huſſy!—But, huſh—mum—here's madame Durocher.

Ell. Dear Catherine, I commit myſelf to you.

Cath. Fear nothing; don't you know I would go through fire and water to oblige you?

Ell. My dear good girl!—

Cath. Huſh, there's ſomebody coming.—Good b'ye; I am going out upon your buſineſs.

(*She goes out.*

Ell. Now let me reflect on my new ſcheme.

SCENE III.

MADAME DUROCHER, ELLEN.

Mad. Du. (*Stopping Ellen.*) ELLEN, where are you going?

Ell. Into my own chamber, madam.

Mad. Du. Stay a moment, I want to ſpeak with you. For theſe two days paſſed you have not been as uſual; you feel ſome ſecret uneaſineſs—

Ell. I, madam!—

Mad. Du. You colour and have tears in your eyes—what's the meaning of this?

Ell. Really, madam—I have nothing to tell you—

Mad. Du. You are intruſted to my care, and I am anſwerable for your conduct; therefore, ſince you will not unboſom yourſelf to me, take notice that I ſhall watch you with ſuch vigilance, as to diſcover

discover the mystery which you conceal from me. Should a girl of your age have secrets?

Ell. But I have none.

Mad. Du. Mighty well; I see 'tis in vain to question you any further. Go, you gone!

Ell. (*Aside, in going.*) Oh, heaven! must I likewise endure the ignominy of suspicion?

[*She retires weeping.*

SCENE IV.

MADAME DUROCHER, *alone.*

SHE weeps—she is all in a tremble.—There is some intrigue, some love-affair in the wind.—Yet she is only fifteen, and appears to have so much prudence and modesty!—nay indeed, pride; for, notwithstanding her meekness, she has pride at bottom.—But she is so pretty, so striking!—All this makes me uneasy.—I'll question my daughter and Georgina; perhaps I may learn something from them.

SCENE V.

MADAME DUROCHER, SILVIA, *in a Polonese,* GEORGINA.

Mad. Du. OH, luckily here they are.—Silvia, come to me.—(*Looking at her gown.*) Why, what a figure you have made of yourself!—

Sil.

Sil. Oh, I was dying for a Poloneſe—'tis ſo convenient, ſo pretty!—eſpecially behind; do but look, madam. *[She turns round.*

Mad. Du. Mighty well.—Ribband-bows, too; nothing is wanting.

Geo. Oh, mademoiſelle has got every thing complete.

Mad. Du. And what's that upon her head, like a great baking-pan?

Sil. A hat.

Mad. Du. Why, child, is your brain turned, that you dreſs in this manner?

Sil. How, madam?—

Mad. Du. Do you know what you look like?—A rope dancer.

Sil. Well, but ladies themſelves wear no other dreſſes now-a-days.

Mad. Du. Ladies have their Poloneſes made by good mantua-makers, and pay ten ſhillings for the making; ladies buy their hats of the beſt milliners; and are you in a ſituation to run into theſe expences? No; beſides, you have not the air of a gentlewoman, therefore can only paſs for an inſignificant city miſs abſurdly dreſſed: and if to all theſe gew-gaws, you add a few fantaſtical airs, you will neither be taken for a lady, nor for the daughter of an honeſt ſhop-keeper, but for ſomething worſe.—Fie, fie—this is all we get by aiming at what is above our ſtation.

Sil. I will go and undreſs, madam.

Mad. Du. You will do very right; but hear me firſt.—Can you tell why Ellen has been ſo melancholy ever ſince yeſterday morning?

Sil. No, madam; but ſhe certainly is very thoughtful; and naturally, ſhe is neither ſullen nor reſerved.

Geo.

Geo. All last night she did nothing but whimper and sob, so that I could not close my eyes. What's the matter, mademoiselle Ellen? says I, three times over.—"I've got a cold in my head, (says she) my nose is stuffed."

Mad. Du. Are you sure she was crying?

Geo. Oh dear, yes, very sure. Then, she neither ate nor drank yesterday—

Mad. Du. And has she told you nothing in confidence?

Geo. No, no, there an't any fear of that; mademoiselle Ellen is so high!—'Cause she reads in history and geography books, she thinks one an't fit to untie her shoe-strings.——Howsomever, other folks may be as good as she; my mother, that's dead and gone, was an upholsterer in Lombard street—

Mad. Du. Fine arguments indeed!—And do you think, Georgina, that we are valued only for our birth? Such notions are ridiculous even in persons of rank; therefore, in us, they are still more foolish.—So you reckon yourself on a footing with Ellen because you are the daughter of an upholsterer! and pray what has your mother to do in this affair? The question is, whether you are as good, as clever, and as well educated as Ellen; that, indeed, would render you her equal. Then, why do you tax her with height?—She certainly is not familiar; but can any girl be meeker, more obedient, less contentious—

Sal. Oh, no; for that matter, Ellen is goodness itself, she despises nobody, she never backbites: then, she is so sensible too, and she knows such fine things!—She has taught me five or six fables of FONTAINE, which are charming.——You don't disapprove of this, do you, madam?

Mad. Du. No surely, for you act very right. When we do not envy those persons who are our superiours in knowledge, their learning becomes an advantage to us; and thus it is, that we always find our account in being good, by gaining both profit and pleasure.—But go, my dear; pray change your gown, and then you may take a walk by and by in the Elysian fields, with madame Bertrand and Ellen.

Sil. If you please, I would rather go to the new *Boulevards*, madam.

Mad. Du. Why so?—you were extremely partial to the Elysian fields—

Sil. (*Embarrassed.*) Oh, because—

Mad. Du. Well?

Geo. Because the two last times—

Mad. Du. Do go on.

Geo. We were followed by a gentleman—

Mad. Du. Hah!—and was Ellen with you?

Geo. Yes indeed—and the gentleman had no eyes but for her; he came and sat down by us; mademoiselle Ellen dropped her fan, he picked it up—

Sil. Upon which, Ellen, in a low voice, desired me to continue our walk; we rose, and the gentleman followed us more closely than ever; so, at length, we resolved to go away; but I do assure you, madam, Ellen did not draw this upon herself; for, when walking, she looks, if possible, still more modest than in the shop.

Geo. Aye, that's true enough; she never stares about; and, to do her justice, is very steady for her age.

Mad. Du. And did the same gentleman follow you the holiday before yesterday?

Geo.

Geo. Aye, that's what he did; and I knew him at once, for all he had changed his dress. 'Twas I who spied him first: mademoiselle Silvia, you must very well remember how I gave your elbow a jog; so then we both looked at mademoiselle Lilien, who blushed up to the ears; and, forsooth, that was quite natural, there was reason enough to be confounded.

Mad. Du. Did the gentleman appear young? Was he well dressed?

Geo. Oh, he has such a likely air!——He seems about five or six and twenty.—If he wore a wig, his face would be handsome; but the crown of his head is e'en almost bald.—When eyeing you, he winks thus—yet, for all that, he is very sightly; and the day before yesterday, he had got on a coat all over gold, and a diamond button at his collar—'twas certainly a fine thing, for it glittered like the sun.

Mad. Du. (*Aside.*) How uneasy all this makes me!

Sil. Here's madame Bertrand, with little Gogo.

SCENE VI.

MADAME DUROCHER, MADAME BERTRAND, SILVIA, GOGO, GEORGINA.

Mad. Du. GOODDAY, niece; are you come to eat soup with us?

Mad. Ber. Yes, madam; and I am likewise come to ask a favour of you; 'tis a holiday to-day, and I have planned a party which would highly entertain Silvia——

Mad. Du. We'll talk of that presently. Silvia, go and look a little to the dinner—then do two

ſums in arithmetick, and write three pages in your copy-book—

Sil. I can't finiſh all that before dinner, madam.

Mad. Du. True; but ſtill I would have you begin; for, you know very well, you muſt neither go out nor amuſe yourſelf till this buſineſs is done.

Sil. Yes, madam. [*Silvia goes out.*

Mad. Du. Georgina, carry away the child; but come and kiſs me firſt, little Gogo.

Gogo. (*Running to kiſs her.*) My hair's all dreſſed, look, aunty; and I've got fine ſhoe-ſtrings, quite new; ſee, they are red. [*She ſhews her ſhoes.*

Mad. Ber. Yes, but I'll lay a wager aunty's little finger will tell her you would not ſit quiet while your hair was doing; and that you provoked the hair-dreſſer.

Gogo. Then why did ſhe drag off my hair ſo?—and why was ſhe ſuch a time a dreſſing it?

Mad. Ber. We muſt ſuffer a good deal in order to look pretty.

Gogo. But muſt one look pretty?

Mad. Du. No, my dear, goodneſs and obedience are the only eſſential things: but as your mother likes to ſee your hair dreſſed, to pleaſe her, you ſhould hold yourſelf properly while it is doing; for no girl can be univerſally beloved unleſs very obedient to her parents.

Gogo. (*To madame Bertrand.*) Well, I'll do what you pleaſe; but, for all that, I'd rather ſpell a whole ſide of a book every day than have my hair dreſſed.

Mad. Du. Go, my little monkey, go and play in the other room.

Gogo. (*Offering to lead Gogo.*) Come, my chuck.

Gogo.

Gogo. Indeed, I can go very well without leading. [*She runs out.*

Mad. Du. How touchy she is!

Mad. Ber. Follow the child, Georgina.

[*Georgina goes out.*

SCENE VII.

MADAME DUROCHER, MADAME BERTRAND.

Mad. Du. REALLY, niece, your little girl has reason to complain of the hair-dressing you torment her with: I would not say this before her, although she is but six years old; for we should never blame a mother in the presence of her child.

Mad. Ber. But she looks so pretty when dressed thus!

Mad. Du. By no means; her hair, without any dressing, is abundantly prettier than when frizzed so tight, and then plastered with powder and pomatum, which makes her look as brown as a beetle; besides, what is of much more consequence, by accustoming her, thus early, to be so long in dressing, you will teach her to waste time, and to become a coquette, a squanderer, and a daudle.

Mad. Ber. Heaven forbid! I hope, my dear aunt, that your good advice will secure me from such a misfortune.

Mad. Du. Since my advice does not displease you, niece, I have some other little things to mention respecting your child. You tell her idle

tales, which answer no good purpose. What use is there in persuading her that *a little finger speaks*, and tells you all she does? It can only serve to keep her longer in a state of folly and childishness, and must lessen her confidence in you, when she discovers you to be the inventer of such nonsense. She will recollect that you told her needless falsehoods, and cease to believe you when you speak the truth. We ought never to deceive children, and should always talk rationally to them, according to their capacity. Besides, is it not better to tell the child plainly that you know what she does, because you watch and observe her; and that it is the superiority of your own sense and judgement, which enables you to guess at her actions? By these means, the child will regard you the more, and likewise habituate herself to respect age and experience, which is an advantageous thing, as it preserves young people from many follies. And now that we are speaking freely, there is another trifle for which I must condemn you: your little girl addresses you in too familiar a style, and that hurts me very much, I acknowledge.

Mad. Ber. Well, it is a real pleasure to me, I own, madam; I would gladly accustom my child to love me——

Mad. Du. You mean right, but take the wrong method. A girl should not treat her mother as an equal, that is contrary to order. By lowering yourself, you will lose your importance, therefore will be less deserving of affection, and certainly less beloved. If the heart of a good child were divested of that respect which is due to a parent, trust me, it would at the same time be divested of half its affection. I do not say we ought to be severe, and that we should keep our children

dren at a distance; far otherwise, for we ought to gain their confidence, and always to treat them with condescension and kindness. Without inspiring fear, let us learn how to deserve respect: 'tis most certain that "familiarity breeds contempt;" nor does it ever answer any other purpose, especially on the part of parents.

Mad. Ber. I comprehend you, madam, and, believe me, I will profit by your advice. I would gladly have my girl as well brought up as Silvia, and shall spare no expence in order to give her an education.

Mad. Du. That is the most valuable present we can bestow upon our children. But, what do you mean to have Gogo taught?

Mad. Ber. I feel some inclination to get her a singing-master.

Mad. Du. I do not advise that. Singing and dancing are two very useless accomplishments in themselves, and, to persons in our station, extremely dangerous.

Mad. Ber. I perfectly understand your meaning, madam; but we spring from a pretty good family, and are so far easy in point of fortune as not to be afraid of those inconveniencies.

Mad. Du. But, for all this, we are only citizens and shop-keepers; and unhappily, we have more than once seen the daughters of people as reputable as ourselves, who have gone upon the Opera-stage.*

Thank

* This Work is not designed as a criticism on any particular class of life, for the Author is persuaded that merit may be found in all. The only persons spoken of here, are those deluded girls, who, against the consent of their parents, enter on the stage; they unquestionably deserve to feel the heaviest weight of general public reprobation; nay, we must even think with satisfaction, that the extreme infamy they

Thank heaven, it is, as I well know, very rare to find young women so fooliſh and unnatural as to forſake their native home, and reſolve to plunge a dagger in the boſom of their parents, by preferring a life of infamy to a laſting and honourable eſtabliſhment.

Mad. Ber. Beſides, if a ſimilar misfortune were to overtake ſuch creditable people as we are, ſurely we ſhould have ſufficient intereſt to get the abominable creature who could thus deſert us, ſhut up for life.

Mad. Du. No doubt of it; but we ſhould take the greateſt precautions in order to avoid coming to ſuch cruel extremities. Coquetry will render every young woman deſpicable, be her rank what it may; and, in our claſs of life eſpecially, ſhe who has not been taught the utmoſt decorum, is liable, at ſome fatal moment, to diſhonour her family; for ſhe is expoſed to dangers and ſeductions from which young women of faſhion are exempt; therefore, you plainly ſee that we cannot take too much care of the education of our daughters.

Mad. Ber. But, from a fear leſt they ſhould turn out ill, muſt we breed them up in ignorance, and renounce the pleaſure of ſeeing them accompliſhed?

incur, added to remorſe and the loſs of their youth, cannot fail, ſooner or later, to avenge their unfortunate parents. They renounce every virtue of their ſex, break through every ſacred duty of nature, and will always be conſidered, by perſons who are endued with ſenſibility, as objects of indignation and horrour. Purſued by Divine Juſtice and parental curſes, they will receive the chaſtiſement which conſtantly overtakes perverſe and unnatural children, and reap the bitter fruits of vice, namely, diſgrace, repentance, and deſpair.

Mad.

Mad. Du. By no means, that is not my opinion. I have no great degree of information myself, but yet, during leisure moments, I have read a little here and there. My late uncle, the advocate, treated me with fifty books *, in which I have found excellent things: this has served still more to convince me that it is almost impossible to discharge all our duties properly without a little education: and therefore, I wished Silvia to have some reading, to write well, to spell correctly, and to be a mistress of accounts†. Such, as near as may be, are my ideas on this subject; but we will talk more of it another time, for 'tis impossible at once fully to discuss such a matter.

* According to madame Durocher's ideas, we may presume that her uncle's present included Thomas à Kempis, Sermons by Bourdaloue and Massillon, Pascal's Thoughts, Nicole's Essays, Telemachus, Pamela, Clarissa, Grandison, Tales by Madame d'Aunoi, Advice from a Mother to her Daughter by Madame de Lambert, The Marquis de Rozelles's Letters, The Magazine for Children, A Treatise on Female Education, or A complete Course of Instruction; and, added to these, The Conversations of Emilia, an excellent work upon education, a work replete with sense and truth, as pleasing as it is moral, and equally calculated to interest and inform mothers and daughters of every description. It will unquestionably be observed, as a very remarkable circumstance, that six valuable books, relative to education, may be quoted, all written by ladies.

† Madame Durocher might add, that one may teach the girls, of whom she is here speaking, some pleasing accomplishments, such as drawing, for instance, without neglecting to instruct them likewise in all kinds of needle-work, that they may be enabled to make things for themselves, instead of idly spending money in purchasing all the millenery they want. But it is principally requisite to accustom them to domestick cares, to instruct them minutely respecting the manner in which a family should be governed, and to set them an example of piety, economy, and diligence.

And how tell me what party of pleasure you wished to propose for Silvia.

Mad. Ber. Why the day before yesterday, my sister went to see a play—

Mad. Du. At the French theatre?

Mad. Ber. Oh, no, 'tis much prettier, and much cheaper too; the best places are only eighteen pence; so we may take this diversion without hurting our pockets: besides, 'tis delightful into the bargain. My sister saw a little farce called, Love turned Mendicant, and she has given me such an account of it!—'tis played by girls from twelve to thirteen years of age, who are so pretty!—

Mad. Du. And undoubtedly you imagine that children, like these, can only represent little plays which are very moral, and such as our girls might hear without danger; well, 'tis quite otherwise. I went once, and saw this very Love turned Mendicant, which you mention; and I do assure you, if I had taken Silvia with me, I should never have forgiven myself for such an act of imprudence.

Mad. Ber. Hah!—

Mad. Du. You have no conception of the indecency of this piece; and every other which these children act is in the same taste.

Mad. Ber. Shameful!—Besides, it must be very unpleasant, nay very shocking to hear girls, still in their childhood, utter things which are capable of making a woman of forty blush; and at the same time to see boldness and depravity displayed in the season of innocence. I can form no idea of this.

Mad. Du. Oh, it is a species of depravity which must disgust the most indelicate persons, that's certain.

Mad.

Mad. Ber. But how comes it that people in our ſtation univerſally take their daughters to that place?

Mad. Du. Becauſe the beſt ſeats are only ſixteen pence.

Mad. Ber. A charming reaſon indeed for chooſing an entertainment ſo deſtructive to morality! Mothers, on returning from ſuch a place, have a fine right to recommend prudence and modeſty to their daughters!—Oh, I ſhall give my ſiſter a good ſcold to-morrow, for having taken ſo much pains to get me there—'tis ſhocking—

Mad. Du. It is to be hoped that time will remedy this abuſe, and that young people will no longer be carried to diverſions by which they may be corrupted.

Mad. Ber. Well, aunt, with your leave, we'll take a pretty walk, as we did the other day.

Mad. Du. Do ſo; and that, in my opinion, is abundantly healthier and more refreſhing than the confinement of a ſuffocating play-houſe; only take a coach, and you may then go and walk about and regale yourſelves in Boulogne wood.

Mad. Ber. With all my heart; and Ellen ſhall go too.

Mad. Du. Yes; but, talking of Ellen, I am diſturbed about her; ſhe is ſo wonderfully dejected! Lately, in her walks with you, ſhe has been followed by a young nobleman; did not you obſerve that?

Mad. Ber. No, I did not; for I am uſed to ſee her much noticed; her figure ſtrikes every body.

Mad. Du. And do you think ſhe always behaves with equal decorum?

Mad. Ber. Yes, indeed, I never saw a girl who was more modeſt, or who cared leſs for her beauty; beſides, ſhe is ſo well brought up, ſo mild, ſo polite!—Nobody would take her for an apprentice.

Mad. Du. The Marchioneſs de Solanges, who is a woman of merit, has beſtowed an excellent education upon Ellen, whom ſhe intends for waiting-maid to her daughter, when that young lady marries. The Marchioneſs (with whoſe patronage I have long been honoured) when ſhe ſet out for Italy, intruſted Ellen, whom ſhe tenderly loves, to my care; and if this girl ſhould, while with me, commit the ſlighteſt indiſcretion, it would really make me wretched: therefore, as want of health prevents my joining your walking parties, I intreat you to be my ſubſtitute, and to obſerve her with attention.

Mad. Ber. Yes, that I will, I promiſe you, madam; but I do aſſure you, her underſtanding ſeems to me above her age.

Mad. Du. I never perceived that ſhe had any levity; nor do I know a better heart than hers; ſtill, as ſhe is only fifteen, her guard ſhould not ſlumber on the watch.

Mad. Ber. Is not ſhe an orphan?

Mad. Du. Yes, to all appearance: her mother, a poor country-woman, fell in love with a young man, married him, and died in child-bed of this little girl: the father, who was but eighteen, enliſted, and went to our colonies, where, in all probability, he died; and madame de Solanges took the child to her country-ſeat, and has had the care of her ever ſince.

Cath. enters, and ſays to madame Durocher. Dinner is on the table, madam.

Mad.

Mad. Du. Well, let us dine; come, niece.

[*They go out.*

Cath. (*Alone, taking money out of her pocket.*) I've got eight guineas for the clothes.—Mademoiselle Ellen will be mightily pleased. Let's make haste and give her the money. [*She goes out.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE the First.

CATHERINE, *alone, entering in a disturbed manner, and looking about.*

HOW! an't she here?—Why, what the deuce is come of her? She's neither in her own room, nor in the shop!—May hap, she is in the kitchen—I muſt go and ſee.

[*She advances to go out.*

SCENE II.

CATHERINE, GEORGINA.

Geo. (*ſtopping Catherine.*) CATHERINE, do you know where Ellen is? She would not ſit down to dinner, which has alarmed madame Dorochen, and ſhe enquires for her.

Cath. Like enough ſhe's in the kitchen.

Geo.

Geo. No; I have juſt been there.

Cath. Indeed! Mercy upon us, where has ſhe poked herſelf?

Geo. I do really believe ſhe's gone out——

Cath. Gone out! What, all alone?

Geo. Lookye, here comes mademoiſelle Silvia, and I dare ſay ſhe knows ſomething, for ſhe ſeems all in a fluſter.

SCENE III.

CATHERINE, GEORGINA, SILVIA.

Sil. Oh, Georgina—I'm diſtracted!—

Geo. What now?——

Sil. Ellen!——

Geo. Well?——

Sil. She is gone off——

Cath. Gone off?

Sil. While we were at dinner.

Geo. So, ſhe has played a pretty prank indeed!

Cath. Can it be?

Sil. Oh, nothing's more clear; ſhe is not in the houſe, and a little Savoyard boy, at the corner of our ſtreet, this moment told my mother he ſaw her run away half an hour ago.

Cath. I am thunder-ſtruck!

Geo. Well, I always thought ſhe'd play ſome mad prank or other—ſhe was ſo cloſe, ſo underhand.

Sil. We ſhould not be in haſte to judge unfavourably—nor can I yet believe that Ellen is not virtuous.

Geo.

Geo. Howſomever, when a girl of fifteen runs away—why, it has not a very promiſing look.

Cath. Pray, mademoiſelle Silvia, an't your good mother ſad and angry with her?

Sil. She weeps, ſhe is diſtreſſed—ſhe has written to the lieutenant of the police—but I hear her—

Geo. Yes, 'tis ſhe.

SCENE IV.

MADAME DUROCHER, SILVIA, GEORGINA, CATHERINE.

Mad. Du. SILVIA, go into your own room; retire, Georgina; and do you ſtay, Catherine, for I muſt talk to you.

[*Silvia and Georgina go out.*

Cath. Why, dear-heart, madam, am I to be anſwerable for mademoiſelle Ellen's tricks? That's out of all reaſon—

Mad. Du. I have ever known you to be an honeſt girl—

Cath. Heaven be praiſed, I never did harm to nobody—

Mad. Du. And I hope you will anſwer me with truth.——Are you in any of Ellen's ſecrets?

Cath. Oh, madam, as I wiſh to live and breathe, I do declare I had not the leaſt notion of her ſtealing off—

Mad. Du. But yet her clothes were in your chamber, and ſhe has carried them all away, except

except a little linen—how could this be done without your knowledge?

Cath. 'Cauſe ſhe bewitched me—that's the truth on't—

Mad. Du. Then you knew of her moving the clothes?

Cath. Bleſs your heart—'twas I who ſold 'em—

Mad. Du. How!

Cath. Aye, ſure enough, to help an old aunt—as ſhe pretended, for now I ſee plainly how it is.—She drawed me into the trap with her ſanctified looks—crying, and then ſaying; "My little Catherine," here, and "my dear Catherine," there.—In ſhort, this very day I ſold her whole ſtock, I gave her eight guineas, and that was all ſhe waited for in order to run off.—A little witch, with her old aunt indeed!—This is the trick ſhe has played me—

Mad. Du. But I don't underſtand one word of this ſtory.

Cath. It is very clear for all that. She cried ſo, pretending 'twas about her old aunt—and ſaid as how her old aunt was in diſtreſs—and that it muſt be concealed from you, 'cauſe of your good heart—and a pack of ſuch flummery—then ſhe ſhewed me an old rag of paper, as black and greaſy as I don't know what.—"'Tis from my old aunt," ſays ſhe.—Mind her cunning!—Oh, ſhe's an artful one!—and only fifteen neither, a little ſlut!—Selling things at ſuch a rate to run off with a young prig (ſaving the reſpect which is due to his quality)—

Mad. Du. What! do you know the perſon who ſeduced this unhappy girl?

Cath. I'll be bound to be hanged if it an't the Marquis

Marquis d'Olſey, who came one morning to our ſhop—

Mad. Du. Why, Catherine, how is it that you did not inform me of all this?

Cath. I had a good mind to tell you; but mademoiſelle Ellen always charged me to ſay nothing, 'cauſe you would lend her money—

Mad. Du. What can this mean?

Cath. Aye, 'twas done to ſham off her own generoſity upon me; you underſtand well enough——

Mad. Du. I'm out of all patience!—But what noiſe is that within?

Cath. Such a racket!—Highty-tighty, why I hear mademoiſelle Ellen's voice!

[*They advance to go out.*

SCENE V.

MADAME DUROCHER, ELLEN, SILVIA, GEORGINA, CATHERINE.

Mad. Du. 'TIS ſhe!

Cath. Dear, dear!

Sil. Here ſhe is, madam, returned of her own accord: ſhe proteſts ſhe is innocent.—Oh, madam, receive her—forgive her!—

Ell. (*Sinking into a chair.*) Alas! excuſe—I am quite ſpent—

Mad. Du. And from whence do you come, unhappy girl?

Ell. Ah, madam!—

Mad. Du. Go, Silvia, leave us alone.

Ell.

Ell. No, let her ſtay, I beſeech you, madam; for I have nothing to communicate that ſhe may not hear.

Mad. Du. Well then, ſpeak; from whence do you come?

Cath. Aye, let us know that.

Ell. (*Riſing.*) I received, this morning, a gold box, a note, and fifty guineas—

Cath. So, ſo! Here is ſomething new—

Ell. I found theſe infamous preſents in my chamber, and am certain ſomebody has bribed Joſeph, and that it was he who put the money and the box into my table drawer—

Cath. A little raſcal!

Mad. Du. And do you know from whom theſe preſents came?

Cath. Aye, aye, I believe ſhe gueſſes.

Ell. From the Marquis d'Olſey——

Mad. Du. Who lives juſt by?

Ell. Yes, madam.

Cath. She don't boggle in her anſwers, however; but ſeems to have 'em quite at her fingers ends.

Mad. Du. Let us how come to the point; after all, why did you go out?

Cath. Aye, that's the thing!

Mad. Du. And where have you been?

Ell. (*With embarraſſment.*) I went to carry back what I had received.

Mad. Du. How! to monſieur d'Olſey's?

Ell. Yes, madam—I delivered my parcel to the porter, directed to madame d'Olſey, the mother—

Mad. Du. But why to that lady?

Ell. Becauſe I have written to her.

Mad.

Mad. Du. Ellen, there is little probability in all this—

Cath. Ah, it don't end well!

Sil. (*Aside, looking at Ellen.*) She is embarraſſed—I tremble—

Ell. I have ſpoken nothing but the truth.

Mad. Du. And did you go in at madame d'Olſey's?

Ell. No, madam.

Mad. Du. But it does not take a quarter of an hour to go and return from hence to madame d'Olſey's; and you have been abſent above an hour.

Cath. She muſt go ſadly out of her way, I'm afeard.

Mad. Du. Have you been no where elſe?—Anſwer me.

Ell. I have been—to another place beſides—

Mad. Du. Where, where?

Ell. I am not at liberty to tell—

Mad. Du. What!

Cath. Ho, ho!

Mad. Du. You are not at liberty to tell, unhappy girl!—

Ell. Appearances condemn me——but ſtill, madam, for pity's ſake, ſuſpend your judgment; I am compelled to ſilence by an indiſpenſable duty.

Mad. Du. Such aſſurance is not to be borne. Prepare to enter the convent immediately; for I ſhall take you there, and there you ſhall remain till the return of madame de Solanges.

Sil. Ellen, unboſom yourſelf to my mother; Catherine and I are going—

Ell. No, mademoiſelle, I ſhall ſay nothing more; for I would rather ſeem culpable, than juſtify

juſtify my conduct by diſcloſing a ſecret intruſted to my keeping.

Mad. Du. And can you expect to make me the dupe of ſuch an evaſion?

Cath. Aye, forſooth, that's a fine fool-trap!

Mad. Du. Ellen, Ellen! how I have been deceived in you!

Ell. And am I then ſuſpected, nay accuſed of the moſt infamous baſeneſs, and driven from a houſe which was ſo dear to me!

Mad. Du. You no longer deſerve to remain in it.

Ell. Juſt heaven!

Mad. Du. Let us begone.—Come—

Ell. What, this moment, madam?—

Mad. Du. You ſhall not ſleep another night under my roof.

Ell. (*To Silvia.*) And you, mademoiſelle Silvia, will you ſay nothing in my favour?

Sil. I pity you, but muſt love you no longer.

Cath. 'Tis heart-breaking, howſomever—

Ell. Good heaven, what trials!—Do all abandon me at once?—

Geo. (*Entering in haſte, and addreſſing herſelf to madame Durochin.*) Here's a lady, madam, who deſires to ſpeak with you.

Mad. Du. I am not in a ſituation to attend her.—Silvia, do you go.

Geo. (*Aſide.*) How they all cry!

Mad. Du. (*To Georgina.*) Do you know the lady's name.

Geo. She calls herſelf the Counteſs d'Olſey.

Ell. Gracious heaven!

Mad. Du. Madame d'Olſey!

Geo. She was juſt at my heels—look, here ſhe comes.

SCENE

SCENE VI. and last.

THE COUNTESS DOLSEY, MADAME DUROCHER, ELLEN, SILVIA, GEORGINA, CATHERINE.

Ell. OH, heaven! what am I going to hear? (*She retires, hiding herself behind Silvia, and leaning against a chair.*)

Mad. Du. (*Advancing towards the Countess.*) Undoubtedly, madam, you wish to speak with me in private; and I too well guess the cause to which I am indebted for the honour of this visit—

The Countess. (*Pointing to Silvia.*) Satisfy my impatience; is not that young woman Ellen?

Mad. Du. No, madam, heaven be praised!—

Coun. But Ellen, Ellen, where is she?

Mad. Du. The unfortunate girl conceals herself; and, no doubt, with reason—

Coun. What do you say?

Mad. Du. Spare her, madam, I beseech you, and walk into my room, where she may explain herself without witnesses—

Coun. What do I hear?—Is Ellen suspected? Let nobody go away; I will justify her before the eyes of all: let her come—

Ell. (*Advancing in a timid manner.*) Behold me, madam; and oh, excuse my rashness, and deign to keep my secret!

Coun. (*Running to her.*) Come my dear girl! (*She takes Ellen into her arms, and embraces her repeatedly.*)

Mad. Du. How! Can she be innocent?

Coun. Innocent!—she is an angel; yes, an angel; her face is the index of her mind.—You no longer have a secret, my dear Ellen; be easy, your father is at my house.

Ell. Gracious heaven!

Mad. Du. Her father!

Coun. His business is settled; my son takes it all upon himself; banish every fear.

Ell. (*Throwing herself at the Countess's feet.*) Ah, madam, you restore me to life!

Coun. Could you for one instant doubt my excessive zeal to serve you?—But I see the astonishment of all by whom you are surrounded, and I feel the liveliest impatience to acquaint them with the truth.

Mad. Du. I am perplexed, I acknowledge; and yet my fondest wishes are accomplished, since Ellen still deserves the regard we had for her.

Sil. I shall never forgive myself for having vexed her so unjustly.

Cath. Nor I neither; but appearances was so strong!

Mad. Du. We should not always judge by appearances, especially when condemning is in question. (*To the Countess.*) But, will you, madam, be kind enough to acquaint us with the particulars of this extraordinary story?—Ellen speaks of her father, I did not know she had one living.

Coun. Her father enlisted at eighteen, and went to the colonies, from whence he has been returned only six months; he is in my son's regiment, and desired leave to spend a month at Paris, with an intention of seeing his daughter: but the very morn-

morning of his arrival; he quarrelled with a comrade, fought, and left his antagonist upon the spot; though wounded himself, he escaped, and took refuge at a little inn, some distance from hence. He was not in regimentals, and believing his adversary to be killed, he carefully concealed his profession and his name. A very lingering illness, occasioned by the wounds he had received, exhausted all his little stock of money; when, being reduced to the last extremity of want, and yet afraid of applying to any one for relief, heaven seemed to inspire him with the thought of intrusting his secret and his sorrows to a girl of fifteen, to his daughter, whom he did not know by sight: he wrote; his letter reached Ellen yesterday—

Mad. Du. Dear girl! So this was the cause of that melancholy, of those tears which she was unable to conceal.—Oh, if she had opened her heart to me—

Ell. Alas! madam, my father expressly forbid it; he acquainted me with his story, adding, that the Marquis d'Olfey was his colonel, and ordering me not to apply to any body but him.

Coun. Judge of Ellen's embarrassment: my son misled, seduced by a passion unworthy of her who inspired it, had presumed to declare himself; several notes and presents, sent this very day, left no room for doubt respecting his base designs and injurious hopes, although he had shunned the grossness of avowing them in his letters. Do not blush, Ellen, for I ought to disclose every thing which can make your innocence more triumphant.—At length, madame Durochat, this lovely girl re-

volved

solved to write and inform me of these particulars; my son was with me when I received her letter; I read it to him, and saw, with pleasure, that he felt the liveliest regret at having presumed to insult so much virtue. He told me that the person with whom Ellen's father fought (a young soldier named *la Tulippe*) so far from being killed, was but slightly wounded, and that he did not even wish to denounce his antagonist. After this explanation, my dear Ellen, my son left me to go in quest of your father, whom he brought to my house, and from whom we have learned that in order to assist him, you sold every thing you possessed, and just now carried him eight guineas. This circumstance affected me the more, because you mentioned nothing of it in your letter. In short, glowing with impatience to see and to embrace you, I came hither, and I find in you all that can excuse my son's weakness, and justify his shame, his repentance, and the admiration with which your conduct has inspired both him and me.

Ell. Oh, madam, what goodness!—

Mad. Du. Poor child!—so young, and yet to act so prudently, so wisely!—

Coun. She was conducted by an unerring guide, a tender, noble, and spotless heart.

Mad. Du. How madame de Solanges will rejoice when told of this!

Coun. Ellen's benefactress must rejoice indeed! Can she receive a more pleasing recompence for all her cares and goodness?—But now, madame Durocher, I have a favour to ask of you—will you intrust me with Ellen for a couple of hours? I am going to lead her to her fa-

ther's arms, and will bring her back to you in the evening.

Mad. Du. She is at your disposal, madam.

Ell. My father!—shall I see him happy? Oh, madam!—

Coun. (Taking Ellen by the hand.) Yes, my dear girl, you will see him happy.—You are in good hands, I could do nothing for you; but it was at least permitted me to reward in the father the virtues of the child. Come, I would have you learn from him the particulars of his good fortune.

Ell. (*Kissing the Countess's hand.*) Allow me, madam—

Coun. Embrace me, my dear girl—

Ell. Will you condescend to permit that?

Coun. Indeed will I.

Ell. (Throwing herself upon the Countess's neck.) How you relieve my heart!

Coun. Charming creature!—I have the happiness of being a mother, but I have no daughter. Oh, heaven! was I undeserving of such a one as this?—But come, dear Ellen, your father expects you. Farewell, madame Durocher; I will return before seven o'clock.

Mad. Du. May heaven crown you with all its blessings, madam!—Will you allow me to attend you to your carriage?

Coun. Most willingly, my good madame Durocher; give me your arm. *(Taking madame Durocher and Ellen by the arm.)* Let us begone.

[*They go out, followed by Silvia.*

Coth. (To Georgina.) Faith, this turns out a rare day for mademoiselle Ellen. We always are gainers by doing our duty, I see that very clear.—Why, made-

mademoiselle Georgina, you look dull: what, you are vexed at having slandered mademoiselle Ellen so, an't that the case? Forsooth, we never should be in such deadly haste to think ill of our neighbours.—But come, though, let's see them get into the carriage; we'll talk this over another time. [*She goes out and Georgina follows her.*

ROCKSPELLER;

A DRAMA.

THE

BOOKSELLER;

A DRAMA,

OF ONE ACT.

Persons of the Drama.

Desormeaux, *a bookseller.*

Henry, *his nephew, a lad of fifteen.*

Leroux, *a bookseller, neighbour and friend to Desormeaux.*

Durval, *a young author.*

The Scene, Desormeaux's house at Paris.

THE BOOKSELLER.

Thus aw'd to fear, inſtructed Bards may ſee,
That Guilt is doom'd to ſink in Infamy.

Pope, Eſſay on Satire. T.

SCENE the Firſt.

The Stage repreſents a Study.

DESORMEAUX, *alone, ſeated in an elbow-chair, and reading a manuſcript.*

After a ſhort ſilence.

WHAT a ſhameful ſatire!—What perſonalities!—What malevolence!—What diſguſtful villainy!—If my neighbour Leroux buys this work, he will make a deſpicable purchaſe.—

The poor fellow has none of that knowledge which our business requires; however, he is still young, and he treats me with friendship, therefore I will, at least, endeavour to serve him by sincere and disinterested advice.—Hah, in the nick of time, here he is.

Desormeaux rises.

SCENE II.

DESORMEAUX, LEROUX.

Des. YOU come quite *à propos*, for I have just this moment finished the manuscript you intrusted me with.

Ler. Well, what think you of it?

Des. That you will do very wrong by printing it, and the author very right by always remaining anonymous.

Ler. 'Tis his determination; I am ignorant of his name myself.——But say, is the satire very sharp?

Des. It raised my indignation.

Ler. So much the better, my friend; it will sell.

Des. Aye, but it will not go through a second edition. Despicable works only meet with a momentary applause; malice may, for an instant, derive pleasure from a libel; but disgust swiftly follows this frivolous and culpable entertainment.

Ler. However, do you think the little poem in question displays abilities and wit.

Des. It seems to me that a work of this sort displays nothing of its author but his disposition, and the depravity of his heart and mind.

always judges partially, as he never is sincere, but sacrifices truth and his reputation to the malicious desire of hurting others, it follows of course that he must perpetually be inconsistent, and that he must oftentimes betray false taste; in the dark labyrinth, whither he is led by malevolence, we lose ourselves with him, and can neither discern his ideas, nor his real opinions.

Ler. Well though, is the work flat or witty?

Def. According to my opinion it is devoid of common sense; yet there are good strokes in it: but does not mediocrity herself, when she takes an unbounded latitude, and submits to no check whatsoever, sometimes stumble on lucky hits?

Ler. Come, return the manuscript.—I shall weigh this matter well.

Def. (*Giving him the manuscript.*) Here—I see you will buy it; I am sorry on your account, and I frankly tell you so.

Ler. But you don't think the work a bad one, and I was asked no more than thirty guineas for it.

Def. By purchasing or printing a work, my dear Leroux, which worthy people cannot read without indignation, we participate in the author's faults, and like him disgrace ourselves. What do I say? A bookseller, in this case, is far more reprehensible than the author; for a bookseller can neither plead the illusions of self-love in his excuse, nor that vain desire of false fame which may so easily misguide a youthful pen. The poem offered to you, outrageously abuses all the men of letters now in repute. Perhaps the author may be animated by private resentments; perhaps he may have reason to complain of those persons whom he treats with so much animosity: I am fully

aware that nothing authorizes injustice and a neglect of decorum, and that this kind of revenge, is always (especially when anonymous) an inexcusable meanness; but if such reprisals are odious even in the author, what will be said of the bookseller? What will be thought of you, who, in cold blood, do not blush at printing a libel against ten persons from whom you never received an injury; against valuable citizens, distinguished by their talents, and whom we in particular ought to honour and respect, because our subsistence depends upon their labours?—Is it possible for you to think, without remorse, that you will assist them, and blast their reputation in the eyes of that idle multitude who examine nothing, and fancy they are qualified, by running over a few bad pamphlets, to decide imperiously, and judge without appeal.

Ler. But you think this little production will strike home; and, morality apart, allow it to be excellent in its kind?

Def. (*Smiling.*) So this is all the advantage you derive from my lecture; my arguments have made a deep impression on your mind!

Ler. Why you, my dear Deformeaux, discuss these matters quite at your ease: you are rich, fortunate, and beloved by men of letters; good works are poured in upon you—

Def. I allow it; but my prosperity is the effect of principles by which I have hitherto been guided, and to which I have strictly adhered. I never haggled with men of literature, but, by treating them with deference and respect, and by behaving towards them, in matters of business, with delicate integrity and scrupulous justice, I have entitled myself to their esteem and confidence.

Such

Such conduct ensures success; for a small degree of understanding, joined with an unsullied character, always leads to fortune. In my opinion the best of all rules is that which teaches us to regulate every action by the laws of invariable honesty; and this maxim is, in a political view, especially applicable to persons in our station, to citizens, whose subsistence must be derived from some art or trade. A man of fashion enters into society with a number of splendid advantages, the greatest of which, perhaps, are the happy prepossessions a good education gives, and the idea that a gentleman can have none but honourable sentiments: every prejudice operates for him, and against us; if he is deficient in principle, he loses his reputation and his peace of mind; but still, intrigue remains, an expedient which is, I acknowledge, equally mean and precarious, yet it is the last hope of a dishonoured nobleman, and a resource of which we are unable to avail ourselves. Consequently, you must perceive that we cannot, without an unblemished character, gain that confidence and respect which alone can ensure success in our undertakings; and do not think it possible to acquire these, without deserving them. Hypocrisy never fails to betray itself; imposture enjoys but a short and limited triumph; the glorious title of an honest man is not to be usurped, and, if we would obtain it, we must be worthy of it; therefore, we can take but one sure path to fortune, that of probity and rectitude! prudent and happy is he who never strikes into a devious course! his success will be entirely owing to his virtues, he will feel its value with transport, and find inexhaustible consolations even in the bosom of adversity.

Ler. Your morality, no doubt, is excellent; you put it strictly into practice, and your example ought to recommend it: however, you, as I just now said, are not only possessed of superior merit, but are likewise one of fortune's favourites; you owe some things merely to the kind influence of your stars. For example, that last work, which has been so well received, and by which you have gained so much money, was offered to me, as it was to you, for fifty guineas; I refused it, and in prudence I ought to have done so; for I had previously shewn it to a man of great discernment, who assured me it was worth nothing. Besides, the author is very young, and was then unknown, being just come out of the country: these reasons induced me to return his manuscript as he applied to you, and, notwithstanding these prudential considerations, you purchased the work, and it has had a great run.—This is a stroke of good fortune.

Def. Do you know my reason for engaging in that business? it was because I read the work, and thought it excellent: therefore, I do not owe this piece of good fortune to the stars, but to my own penetration.

Ler. I had no doubt but you were able to judge of a pamphlet; though, I must confess, I thought so considerable and so learned a work above your reach. Well, I grant that *the stars* here, had no influence; and if I had known as much as you do, I should have been more lucky in this instance, because the manuscript was offered first to me.—You gave but fifty guineas for it?

Def. That really is the sum which the young man asked me—

Ler.

Ler. For three large volumes—what a bargain!

Def. But after having read them, I was so much surprized at the author's wonderful abilities, that I advised him to print for himself, offering to make the necessary advances.

Ler. This is what I did not expect!

Def. In short, I printed the books without demanding any money of the author; and I have already paid myself, and got the reasonable profits which a printer ought to make; the surplus will belong to the author, who will clear at least five hundred and fifty pounds by this work.

Ler. However, that sum might, with strict integrity, have been yours: excuse me, but, in my opinion, you carry generosity even to extravagance.

Def. I am rich enough to gratify my inclinations in such a conjuncture, without being guilty of imprudence; neither would I have acted thus by a man of second-rate abilities; and as great talents are not common, there is much reason to suppose that I shall not be thrown into similar circumstances during the whole course of my future life. What! could you have wished me to avail myself of the distressed situation and inexperience of a young author whose writings announced so much good sense and genius?—This man will certainly acquire a brilliant reputation, and shall not I derive credit from having furnished him with the means of so doing? Think you he can ever forget it? Think you that I may not be certain of printing all his works? therefore the action I have done has promoted my interest while it gratified my feelings.

Ler.

Ler. Why, that's true, I can't say one single syllable against it—here's a man of merit attached to you for life; and the more strongly, because you have, as I am told, printed his work with such care!—

Def. In that respect, I did nothing particular for him; because it is my constant aim to print without typographical errours.

Ler. Without errours!——'tis an impossibility!

Def. Yes, when we want attention; but the printer who is really well-informed, and who feels a laudable desire to distinguish himself in his business, should print with perfect accuracy *.

Ler. Extreme vigilance is requisite in order to accomplish that.—But I believe your nephew is coming. Good b'ye, dear Desormeaux; we will sup together, and I will then tell you my determination about this manuscript; for I must give an answer in three hours. Adieu, till the evening.

Def. Till then, farewell. [*Leroux goes out.*

Def. (*Alone*). I can easily guess what he will do; for there is no small difficulty in making a narrow mind hear reason.

* Robert Stephens, a printer at Paris, who lived in the sixteenth century, and was one of the most learned of his contemporaries in Greek and Latin literature, set a high value on the merit of correct typography; and, in order to succeed the more perfectly in this respect, it is said that he exposed the sheets, as they came from the press, to publick inspection; bestowing a reward upon every person who shewed him an errour. We are indebted to him for the finest and most correct editions of many ancient authors.

SCENE

SCENE III.

DESORMEAUX, HENRY, *with a book in his hand.*

Def. WELL, Henry, what do you want?

Hen. I am come, sir, to return the book you lent me, and to desire another.

Def. Have you taken any extracts from that?

Hen. Yes, sir.

Def. And have you made your own little observations upon the style, beauties, and defects of the work?

Hen. Yes, sir.

Def. Then why did not you bring the paper?

Hen. Because it really is not worth seeing.

Def. I suppose so; you are only fifteen, an age when we are incapable of judging for ourselves; but, from such exercises, you may acquire taste and accuracy, because I gradually point out your deficiencies.

Hen. The Abbé is just gone, and seems extremely well satisfied with my improvement in Latin—

Def. It is more especially requisite that he should be satisfied with your improvement in your *mother tongue*; for you know I design to breed you up to my business; you will be my successor; and unless you are thoroughly acquainted with your own language, you must always be a bad printer. Besides, if devoid of instruction, literature, and taste, how can you judge of the works which

which may be offered to you? Every tradesman knows the value of the goods he deals in, and would soon be infallibly ruined if he were in any respect ignorant of his trade. It is the same with a printer, only his business demands a kind of knowledge more difficult to acquire, but then it is more distinguished, more valuable. In a word, your god-father, Rowland, cannot be deceived in the worth of a silk, and you, my dear Henry, should qualify yourself not to be so in the worth of a book.

Hen. No doubt of it. Poor Leroux, for instance, refused monsieur Durval's excellent work merely from ignorance; while you, sir, printed it without hesitation, because you entered into its merit. But *à propos* of monsieur Durval, I know why he has been so melancholy for some days past, 'tis owing to bad circumstances: he came from the country without recommendations, is young, and has inconsiderately spent all his money and reduced himself to distress.

Def. Who told you these particulars?

Hen. His footman mentioned them in confidence to our cook; the intelligence hurt me, for monsieur Durval is so amiable!—'Tis true, you have now paid yourself for the expenses of printing, and the produce of the remaining copies will be his; but if his wants are urgent—

Def. I love to see this anxiety.—Never fail to honour talents: indeed, the man who is oppressed by fortune, and unites worth with genius, undoubtedly deserves, more than any other person, to be felt for and respected by susceptible and exalted minds.

Hen. Hah! I hear monsieur Durval, sir.

Def.

Def. Yes, 'tis he. Well, my lad, go into my chamber, I shall follow you presently, and we will then talk over what you have been reading to day.

Her. Yes, sir. [*He goes out.*

SCENE IV. and last.

DESORMEAUX, DURVAL.

Def. (*Advancing to meet Durval.*) YOU anticipate me, sir; I meant to call at your house this evening.

Dur. I come to you, because I want consolation; and here you are my only friend.

Def. I flatter myself I shall never be unworthy of a title which is as honourable to me as it is dear.

Dur. Well, another critique has just appeared against my work!——I own, I am quite exasperated.

Def. Is not this critique in the Mercury *?

Dur. No, it makes an entire pamphlet of an hundred pages.

Def. I have not heard of it. So this is the fixth critique on your work, which, for a *coup d'essai*, is tolerably encouraging——

Dur. I know 'tis a received opinion that none but good things are criticised; and yet, I am not at all proud of such encouragement.

* A kind of Magazine published every week at Paris.

Def. I understand; you were too modest to flatter yourself with so great an honour.

Dur. Ah, monsieur Defermeaux, you rally, while I am enraged, disheartened, and driven to despair!

Def. I have only one word to urge in reply; spite of criticisms, your work still sells; I know it is translating into several languages, and there has already been one piratical edition: what more can you desire?

Dur. Oh, if you had read this last critique!— Not one argument, not one solid objection, a series of mere ridicule!

Def. What, would it have pleased you better if this critique had been solid, reasonable, and well-founded?

Dur. Undoubtedly not; yet, though truth sometimes wounds, it may at least be useful; but injustice oppresses and disgusts—

Def. It should only excite contempt.

Dur. What injury have I done all these people, that they should so furiously pull me to pieces?

Def. Merit at first rouses envy, but can always disarm it by modesty and forbearance.

Dur. No, no; I am exasperated and will defend myself.

Def. How?

Dur. By answering my adversaries, and by throwing upon them that ridicule with which they wish to load me.

Def. This is all they desire. You have produced a good work, which not only does honour to your understanding, but likewise gives mankind the highest opinion of your manners, temper, and principles: by this valuable performance

confidence you have deservedly obtained the good-will of every worthy person; and the malevolence with which you are attacked, only serves to strengthen such justly merited regard. But, if suffering yourself to be misled by a blind resentment, you engage in frivolous disputes, if you shew towards your adversaries that spleen and injurious irony which they have employed against you, you will give additional weight and consequence to their writings, and may, perhaps, irretrievably lose the esteem and respect of the publick. Ah, sir, recollect that sound philosophy, those indulgent sentiments with which your work is replete! Will you destroy the flattering idea you have taught men to conceive of your merit? Can you be imprudent enough to contradict, by your conduct, precepts which would have excited less admiration if they had not seemed to flow from the author's soul? Let my age and friendship serve as an excuse for the freedom of these reflexions; exert your understanding to a better purpose, I conjure you, sir; the most complete revenge you can take on your enemies is not to lose your time by answering them, but to appear above abuse and injustice, and to employ your pen on some new work which may still increase your reputation.

Dur. I receive these prudent counsels with gratitude, and am equally struck and affected by them: but, yet, is it possible to bear continual insults without shewing a just resentment?

Def. Criticisms fall of themselves, if they are thought unworthy of an answer: besides, we soon blush at pursuing him who determines to make no resistance: there is so much meanness in an attack of this kind, that even the most ungenerous

generous enemy must be withheld from it, by a fear of incurring publick censure and universal contempt *. But since I have your leave to speak freely, sir, allow me further to ask some questions respecting your finances; living in Paris must have deranged them—

Dur. No matter, I can wait—

Def. Why should you refuse me the pleasure of offering you an advance upon your work? This proposition ought the less to hurt your delicacy, because I am treasurer to a fund which is now your own, as the first cost is balanced, and therefore the means of payment are in my hands.

Dur. Oh, I am penetrated, as I ought to be, with a gratitude as lively as it is just.—How mean should I appear in my own eyes if I were capable of abusing so much goodness!—It is not my pride that refuses you; no, I look upon you as a father; you have given me the advice of a father, you have acted like one—but delicacy of sentiment surpasses even that of vanity—and you have already done so much for me—

Def. All extravagant delicacy is nothing better than mere whim; and though this excess un-

* No criticisms are meant to be included here, but those which are dictated by hatred, stained with invectives, personal abuse, and misrepresentations; and which the bitter and false wit of malevolence strives to embellish with all that common-place irony, all those dull jokes of that despicable kind which requires very little wit and genius; whereas a large share of those qualities is necessary for true criticism, which is always impartial, moderate, acute, and delicate; this alone instructs and corrects without offending, improves the taste, and even merits the esteem of those authors whom it blames and enlightens.

doubtedly

doubtedly results from a noble cause, still, reason condemns, and friendship particularly should correct it. By condescending to say you look upon me as a father, you give me a father's authority; therefore, I have a right to prohibit idle compliments.—I shall send a hundred guineas to your house: and, after all, there's nothing the least extraordinary in my conduct; I have the sum at command, I lend it to you, and for a very short time, because the sale of your work will probably reimburse me within a couple of months.

Dur. I cannot reply—I am too deeply struck—too much affected—Ah, monsieur Desormeaux, if you were sensible of the extensive service you render me!—

Def. But am I not as much pleased as I am honoured by being able to give you this slight proof of my zeal and attachment?

Dur. (*After a moment's reflexion.*) I no longer ought to hide any thing from you. (*He takes a manuscript out of his pocket.*) Being in the greatest want of money, and at the same time incensed by all the criticisms on my work, I composed, in a week, a little satirical poem against those persons whom I suspected to be my enemies—

Def. A poem in a week!

Dur. Poems of this odious kind are so easy! they neither require method, plan, nor argument; raillery, gall, and injustice, are quite sufficient to distinguish a man in such a species of composition. I was extremely irritated, and wrote, with rapidity, a work, which sullies my character, and which my heart and judgment disavow. But I have learned, from your wise counsels, that my rage was imprudent and culpable, therefore I abjure it. (*Giving him the manuscript.*) Here, my respectable friend,

read

read this vile production. I would have you know how much I am indebted to you, and that cannot be, unless you cast your eyes over this manuscript; then you will really enjoy the sweetest pleasure of which great minds are susceptible, that of having re-animated an honest bosom with a love of its duties and of virtue.

Def. (*Casting his eyes upon the manuscript.*) What do I see?—I am acquainted with this work!—it was to have been purchased by Leroux—

Dur. Yes, I applied to him, well knowing that he neither had your principles, nor your honesty.—It would be impossible to offer you such a satire without insulting you; but Leroux readily determined to become my accomplice; and I just now received a message from him to inform me that he accepted my proposal. I sent again for the manuscript, designing to return it to-morrow, after I had made some alterations; but kind fortune led me hither; your counsels have enlightened my understanding and subdued my heart; your friendship has relieved me from distress; you are the preserver of my reputation; in short, it is you who save me from the unsufferable grief of that dreadful remorse which a fault like mine would have occasioned.

Def. Most truly do I applaud myself for a mode of behaviour which has merited your confidence!—I have read this work—it would have ruined you—

Dur. Have you read it?

Def. How unworthy it is of your talents! how incompatible with that nobleness and sensibility by which you are distinguished!

Dur. I feel it.——My first errour would have begot a thousand more, and delivered me up to

of the transports of hatred and injustice.—You have banished from my heart those black passions by which it was agitated; nor can I, without shuddering, think that I was on the point of losing every virtue!—Now I am no longer inflamed with any thing but the desire of distinguishing myself by equity, moderation, and generosity; I will place my glory in doing justice to my enemies; and the exalted gratification I shall derive from appearing impartial will enable me to praise them without an effort.—I rise above them; I can hate them no longer—Alas, notwithstanding this absurd outrage, their hearts, perhaps, were formed for virtue!—Nay, I myself, without a friend, what should I have been?

Def. How delicious are the emotions you excite in my bosom! How pure is the joy I taste on seeing peace, the happy offspring of moderation, and amiable mild indulgence, the never-failing attendants upon justice and generosity, re-animate that noble heart!—But my nephew is waiting for me in my chamber, let us go and set him at liberty; afterwards we will resume this interesting conversation.

Dur. Yes, but let us, in the first place, burn that manuscript, upon which I cannot cast my eyes without blushing.

Def. How you will applaud yourself hereafter for a sacrifice so meritorious!

Dur. I am recompensed already by your esteem. Come, let us delay no longer—

Def. May all authors, enlightened respecting their true interest, constantly adopt these noble sentiments! [*They go out.*

THE

TRULY WISE MAN;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

Persons of the Drama.

Ophemon, *a tradesman retired from business.*

Vercèil, *his son.*

Reynold, *a young physician related to Ophémon.*

The Chevalier, *a neighbour of Ophémon's.*

Andrew, *a young peasant.*

Picard, *Ophémon's footman.*

The Scene, Ophémon's seat in Champagne.

THE TRULY WISE MAN.

On eſt heureux dès qu'on eſt ſage.
M. le Card. de Bernis.

Wiſdom alone is happineſs below.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The Stage repreſents a Country-manſion.

THE CHEVALIER, PICARD.

Che. SO the worthy Ophémon is not at home?

Pic. No, ſir; he is gone to the farm to ſee poor Euſtace, who has been like to die.

Che. Euſtace, Collette's father?

Pic. The very ſame; he was cured by monſieur Reynold, a young phyſician, who is related to my maſter.

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Che. And Verceil, where is he?

Pic. With his father.

Che. I quite long to ſee Verceil again.

Pic. That's natural, when folks have been brought up, as you may ſay, together.

Che. Yes, my uncle ſet a great value on Ophémon's ſimplicity—beſides, he is well-informed—and ſuch a deep thinker!

Pic. Oh, that ſame uncle of yours was a worthy nobleman! My maſter took on ſadly at his death—

Che. Come, Picard, let's hear a little about Collette; is ſhe as handſome as ever?

Pic. Faith, ſhe an't grown homely in ſix or ſeven months; on the contrary—

Che. I remember I uſed to think her enchanting.—I had ſeen nothing then—but I really believe a ſix months *ſéjour* at Paris does render the taſte ſomewhat more delicate—

Pic. And yet they ſay the Pariſian ladies are quite varniſhed; now, for my part, methinks I ſhould not like that; but, at the ſame time, perhaps it might make me reckon the country-girls too pale.—So I ſhould gain nothing on one ſide, and loſe on the other.—This would be a bad bargain.—It puts me in mind of what I once heard my maſter ſay, that any thing which refines the taſte too much, ſpoils it at laſt.

Che. According to that maxim, taſte reigns here, in all its purity; for I'm ſure I don't know any people who are leſs refined than the gentlemen of this province.

Pic. Oh, my maſter's a coming, I fancy!

Che. Yes, indeed, here he is.

[*Picard goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

THE CHEVALIER, OPHEMON, VERCEIL, REYNOLD.

Che. GOOD morning to you, monſieur Ophémon.—Verceil, your ſervant—

Ver. You here!—what an agreeable ſurprize! *(He advances to embrace him; the Chevalier draws gently back, and offers his hand to Verceil, but does not embrace him.)*

Che. Indeed, I'm mighty glad to ſee you.

Ver. *(Aſide.)* What a cold reception!

Oph. *(To the Chevalier.)* We did not know of your return—

Che. I only came on Sunday—nor do I intend to ſtay long: till my houſe is put into order you will ſee me but little at it.

Oph. Why, your houſe is ſuperb—and furniſhed with ſuch ſplendour—

Che. 'Tis not habitable—I ſhall pull it down.

Oph. Pull it down!

Che. *(Laughing.)* That's quite a fin, is it not?—And thoſe gardens, the admiration of the province, that fine elm tree-walk, thoſe majeſtick horſe-cheſnuts, I ſhall cut them all down.—Am I not very unmerciful? quite original, at leaſt?

Oph. Original! oh, no, not that.—I ſee nothing in your plans but what is very common. Don't you deſign to ſpend a great deal of money in order to transform a magnificent garden into a country proſpect?

Che. Exactly ſo; in ſhort, an Engliſh garden.

Oph. And to turn a ſpacious manſion into a *mere cottage?*

Che. The very thing.

Oph. Well, sir, in all this you conform to the fashion, therefore cannot, with justice, be accused of singularity, since you are only an imitator.—But, monsieur Reynold, we will have time to take our little walk round the village before the hour when the archers are to shoot for the prize—

Cib. What walk?

Rey. We are going to visit the poor who are sick.

Che. (*To Reynold.*) That is proper in you who are a physician; but what has monsieur Ophémon to do with it?

Rey. He pays for the broth and medicines which I order, sir.

Che. It seems natural enough to give money, but to carry it oneself—

Rey. Much less would be given if we were satisfied with sending it.

Ver. Indeed, we should see poor sufferers, in order to grant them that share of pity and concern which they deserve.

Cib. Did not you talk of some archers who are to shoot to-day?

Ver. Yes, my father gives a prize—

Che. Charming! I shall be a spectator—

Oph. (*To the Chevalier.*) Then you will be kind to excuse my leaving you for one hour, sir?

Che. Treat me like a neighbour, monsieur Ophémon; no ceremony, I desire—

Oph. My son shall have the honour of supplying my place, since you allow it. Come, monsieur Reynold. [*He goes out, accompanied by Reynold.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

THE CHEVALIER VERCEIL.

Che. I DID not know this monsieur Reyhold.

Ver. He practised physick at Lyons two or three years with success, but wishing to settle at Paris, my father facilitated his plan; and he, out of gratitude, is come to spend six weeks here.

Che. Your father makes an excellent use of his fortune.—But, Verceil, after an absence of seven months, I have a thousand questions to ask.—You don't mention Collette.—Aha! you colour; well, you still love her then?

Ver. How could my affections change in so short a time?

Che. So short a time! seven months!—Your ideas, respecting the continuance of a passion, are extremely rustick.—And, pray, is Collette apprized of your love?

Ver. You will laugh at me.—Twenty times have I designed to acquaint her with it, but could never summon courage——

Che. Why, a farmer's daughter, a country-girl of sixteen, really commands a prodigious deal of respect.

Ver. Yes, for innocence and virtue always do. Besides, Collette's rank should not be held in contempt, especially by me, whose birth is as little distinguished as hers.

Che. Love makes you very modest.—However, you must observe a small difference between yourself and Collette, which is, that you will one day have upwards of four thousand a year.

Ver. They muſt be very humble in other reſpects who are proud of this advantage only.

Che. How! very humble?

Ver. Yes, he who conſiders fortune as his greateſt recommendation, can place but little confidence in the charms of his temper and underſtanding.

Che. Your ſentiments are perfectly romantick; and poſitively, dear Verceil, you were born to woo a ſhepherdeſs.—But, joking apart, I wiſh to be of ſervice to you in your rural amours. Tell me, don't you come to Paris next winter?

Ver. Yes, 'tis my father's deſign; and I confeſs I am ſorry for it: I ſhall go from hence with regret.—I was brought up on this ſpot, I have never left it—

Che. Do you feel no curioſity to ſee Paris?

Ver. Not the leaſt.

Che. I know the reaſon of that well enough—but, if I told you I had contrived a very eaſy way of bringing Collette to Paris?—

Ver. 'Tis impoſſible.

Che. I am ſure I can do it.

Ver. But how?

Che. Aye, that's the ſecret. You have love; I have parts and diſcretion; ſo you ſhall remain ignorant of my expedient till it has ſucceeded.

Ver. Are you not joking?

Che. (*With a very ſerious look.*) Oh, fie! on an affair of this importance, a love affair!—

Ver. Nay, I can't tell, for you have brought from Paris a certain air and manner—which make you quite different from what you were.

Che. (*Smiling.*) Why, indeed, I really believe I am a little altered.

Ver. Oh, very much.

Che.

Che. You terrify me.—Have I totally loſt that eaſe, that grace peculiar to Champagne, of which, however, I am ſtill the ſincere admirer?

Ver. Come, I like this way of talking; hitherto I have been at a loſs to tell whether you ſpoke ſeriouſly or not, but now I doubt no longer.

Che. Perhaps you take what I ſay for a joke?—How fooliſh!—Am I not quite a plain, downright fellow?

Ver. Indeed, I believe you have pretenſions to appear ſo.

Che. (*With a loud laugh.*) Pretenſions—'tis the very word.—(*With extreme gravity.*) Yes, theſe are my *pretenſions*.—I have no other—

Ver. I ought to think ſo; for like a plain, downright fellow, you renounce all diſguiſe, and ſhew yourſelf in your natural colours.

Che. Why, Verceil—you take your revenge, methinks.—Well, I prophely that you will be *a wit*—quite a wit.—But now let us talk ſeriouſly. (*With an air of gravity and importance.*) Indeed, I am exceſſively anxious—I ſay exceſſively, to ſee you ſettled at Paris. Your father has given you an extremely good education.—That Abbé, that man who brought you up, had merit—and you have fully anſwered his cares. You may paſs your time very pleaſantly at Paris.—I have already prepoſſeſſed all my friends in your favour.—In a word, I will undertake to introduce you.—But your father muſt have an excellent houſe—for, ſituated as you are, that cannot be diſpenſed with.—Get a great number of horſes, and boxes at every publick-place; play high, and I promiſe you the moſt brilliant connexions, together with all the pleaſures I myſelf enjoy.

Ver. What do you call *brilliant connexions?*

Che. That speaks for itself—connexions with persons distinguished by their birth and rank.

Ver. It is with those who are distinguished by their virtues and good sense, that we should wish to be connected.

Che. (*in a contemptuous manner.*) Oh, mighty well!—And yet, my dear Verceil, in your situation—it would be flattering—

Ver. What, to be admitted into the most brilliant society? If I owed that favour to my personal merit, well and good; but when I can only attribute it to suppers and idle expence, I shall be very little flattered by it.—No, I will never make advances to a man who is my superiour in rank, nor covet the honour of his acquaintance, but in proportion as I think him amiable; for he who, in my station, suffers his head to be turned by a high-sounding name, really does not deserve to receive any notice, except for the sake of his fortune. I hope I shall avoid this folly, and not indulge so nonsensical a whim as that of ruining myself by meanness.

Che. All this same philosophy will yield to the desire of getting into good company.

Ver. Good company!—I shall seek for that, no doubt; but it is not comprised in one particular circle, it is found wherever we meet with taste, genius, and morality.

Che. The Parisian air will soon produce a change in your sentiments.

Ver. That Paris may spoil a young man, I will not deny—but, at the same time, I believe a sound understanding can, in all places, preserve prudence and reason.

SCENE

GENTLEMEN, monsieur Ophémon has sent me to ask whether you like to come and see the archers?

Ver. Are they going to begin?

Pic. In half an hour, and the people already flock together in the market-place; 'tis a charming sight. I

Shall we go, Vereuil?

Ver. With all my heart; I'll follow you.

[*They go out.*

Pic. (*alone.*) Egad, the Chevalier an't improved by his journey through!—He used to be civil and affable, but that's all over.—He has got such a proud, staggering look!—Aye, he's not very deep, I'll lay a wager, for a man must have little sense indeed who can change thus, from good to bad, in seven months.—But there's somebody coming. What now? 'tis Andrew!

SCENE V.

PICARD, ANDREW.

Pic. HOW happens it that you are not in the market-place, Andrew?

And. Oh, I'm time enough—they won't begin till it strikes twelve, and I shall hear the clock from hence.—But I say, monsieur Picard, whereabouts does the doctor live?

Pic. What, with that broad florid face of yours, do you want to consult him?

And. No, no, I ha'n't any need; and I am e'en almost sorry too, 'cause they say as how he gives advice for nothing.

Pic. Yes, faith, 'tis unpleasant not to have the good luck to be sick that you might profit by this.

And. Aye, marry; now I've only to be taken bad after he's gone, and that would be ill luck with a vengeance.

Pic. Well, but what have you to say to the doctor?

And. I wishes to thank him.

Pic. For what?

And. For curing Eustace.—Oh, he has done such a miracle about that!—Eustace, who has been so near dying, well, there he is, set upon his legs again as if nothing had ailed him.—He is just gone with Collette to the merry-making.

Pic. But Eustace is no way connected with you?

And. Lack-a-day, not in the least—howsomever, he is Collette's father—

Pic. Aha! I understand.——So Collette has touched your heart?

And. For goodness sake, monsieur Picard, don't let this get wind.—Eustace is worth a deal of money; I, for my part, have nothing at all, you see; and may hap I must be obliged to give up Collette.

Pic. Tell me in confidence, does she like you?

And. You won't tattle?

Pic. No, I promise you that. I only wish to speak a good word for you to my master, so fear nothing.

And. Well then, I'll tell you all.—This was the way it came about; I am Eustace's neighbour, and seeing Collette so pretty, I always found a pretence for going to their house; sometimes after one thing, sometimes after another.—"Neighbour," (says I,) I'm come to borrow a shovel full of live coals.—"Neighbour," (says I,) I'm come to light our lamp."—Well, so this went on all winter—and then, in summer, came the dances under the great elm tree.—I always danced with Collette, but durst not speak to her; howsomever, I looked with all my eyes, and fancied as how she blushed if I did but take a spy at her only for two minutes.—Well, says I to myself, that's a good sign, says I; and this larnt me wit—so, ad zooks, Le'en makes a bold push, and pops in some few little love speeches.—She looked aghast.—"Come, come, (says she,) you joke, Andrew."—"No, indeed, mamselle Collette!"—Well, so upon that she growed thoughtful, and then said, says she; "Don't let me hear any more of this, but speak to my father."—So then, she left me: and ever since she has been mortal grave, and shuns me; yet, 'tis only her feet which runs away, for she seeks me with her eyes—and we talk together without saying a word.—I see plain enough she thinks of me; and finding her so vast prudent and modest has only doubled my love.—So this is whereabouts I be at present, monsieur Picard.

Pic. And you durst not apply to honest Eustace?

And. No—for if he refused, it would kill me.

Pic. Be easy, I'll engage my young master in your favour.

And. Odsbud, what a clever notion!—Our young landlord is so good-natured!—and then I think he wishes well to Collette—

Pic.

Pic. Hush; don't the clock strike?

And. Aye, that's what it does.

Pic. Let us set off to the market-place. Have you got your bow?

And. Yes, I left it at the door.—Ah, how I long to win the prize! for Collette would certainly be vast glad to see me the cleverest.

Pic. Oh, love, they say, is a rare thing to make folks clever.—Come along, my lad. [*They go out.*

End of the First Act.

ACT II.

SCENE the First.

OPHEMON, REYNOLD.

Oph. THE hearty mirth of these honest villagers gives me such pleasure!—

Rey. Andrew's, especially, is very great.

Oph. That's quite natural, he has gained the prize, he is the hero of the day.

Rey. How you must enjoy all this?——What happiness can be compared with that of a rich and beneficent man, who resides upon his own estate!

Oph. In your profession, my dear Reynold, you may taste these delicious enjoyments of a feeling mind: cherish that precious humanity, without

without which the moſt able phyſician but imperfectly fulfils his ſacred duties. He ſhould pity the diſeaſes he undertakes to remove; pity will lead him to the poor, who are deſtitute of help, and pity alone can induce him to employ all the reſources of his art; pity alone will preſerve him from a culpable negligence, or from a diſcouraging harſhneſs; and by that tender emotion he will be taught how to conſole his patients, to ſtrengthen their ſpirits, and to rekindle hope in the mind which is dejected by fear, and impaired by melancholy!—What an exalted profeſſion is this, when properly exerciſed!—Can any man be more heroick than he who devotes his talents, his lucubrations, and his life, to ſuffering human nature?——Quackery, pedantry, and ridiculous arrogance, have but too often brought this noble profeſſion into contempt; but a ſkilful and compaſſionate phyſician, who loves all his duties, is undoubtedly the moſt reſpectable of men, and the moſt deſerving of univerſal gratitude and admiration.

Rey. Your generoſity has provided me with the means of attaining the ſituation which I preferred to every other; and by your counſels I am taught how to diſtinguiſh myſelf in it. Believe me, ſir; your precepts and your kindneſs will never be effaced from my remembrance.

Oph. I rely on your friendſhip, my dear Reynold; and the pleaſure I ſhall derive from ſeeing you again at Paris, will greatly alleviate my regret on quitting this agreeable retreat.

Rey. You will ſet out towards the end of autumn?

Oph. Yes, and I certainly cannot make a greater ſacrifice to my ſon; ſince for him alone I

reſolve

resolve to renounce the comforts of so pleasant, so quiet a life. His early youth has glided away far from tumult and depravity; but, with the fortune he must have, it will be impossible for him not to mix, at some time or other, in the great world; 'tis therefore necessary that he should be made acquainted with it. At least, I wish to observe his conduct, to guide him at his outset, and to choose him a deserving wife. I am old, and, if I delayed any longer, might, perhaps, be unable to execute designs which I have so much at heart. These reasons, my friend, prevent me from deferring my departure.

Rey. I think your son seems grieved at this hasty resolution.

Oph. I don't doubt it; he has those virtues, and that simplicity of taste, which make us love the country: besides, I suspect there is a secret cause which likewise contributes to attach him to this place.

Rey. I own my ideas, on that point, coincide with yours; and Collette is so uncommonly beautiful!

Oph. I am persuaded that he is in love with her.

Rey. And I am confident the Chevalier either is, or will be his rival; for I thought he seemed amazingly struck, just now, with the young woman's appearance.

Oph. I hear my son, and will absolutely come to an explanation with him.

Rey. Yes, here he is.—I shall leave you.

[*He goes out.*

Oph. (*Alone.*) Verceil is ingenuous; I am sure he will answer all my questions with sincerity.

SCENE

SCENE II.

OPHEMON, VERCEIL.

Oph. COME hither, ſon. I wiſh to converſe with you, and to profit by a moment in which we are alone; but tell me firſt what you think of the Chevalier: his reſpectable uncle's kindneſs and friendſhip towards me, formed between that young man and yourſelf, a connexion, on the ſolidity of which I never relied; and you ſee, Verceil, I was not miſtaken.

Ver. To be ſure, ſir, I find the Chevalier's behaviour entirely altered. Inſtead of that confidence, that friendſhip, with which he formerly treated me, I no longer experience any thing from him but proud looks, indifference, and an air of raillery or of patronage which wounds and congeals me.

Oph. The Chevalier has no marked character, little underſtanding, and all the childiſh vanity of narrow minds: I forewarned you that he would one day be aſhamed of having called a man of humble birth his intimate friend: he now makes you feel the truth of my prediction; he afflicts, and, perhaps, mortifies you; this is the inconvenience of attaching ourſelves to perſons who are our ſuperiours in rank, when they have not thoſe qualities and that degree of good ſenſe, which alone can preſent us from dreading the capricious fancies and inconſtancy of a frivolous and deſpicable pride.

Ver.

Ver. Certainly, sir, thanks to those principles for which I am indebted to you, I am well assured I shall never be ashamed of my birth; but still, I could not bear disdain, however unjustly incurred; and, to avoid that, must I always lay myself under the restraint of mixing only with my equals?

Oph. No; you should cultivate the acquaintance of every valuable man, who will receive you with kindness, whatsoever his rank may be. But constantly remember that you are a tradesman's son, and that you owe your wealth merely to a wonderful concurrence of fortunate circumstances: be modest, have a pleasant house, and handsome suppers, but neither aim at parade nor magnificence; for if your riches seem to intoxicate, they will make you ridiculous and contemptible. Regarding your behaviour towards persons of quality, there is one thing which I particularly desire, that you will always treat them with the strictest politeness; this is the only way to deserve their respect; too much ease and freedom, far from placing you on a level with them, would soon make you feel the distance you thought to lessen; for it would produce, on their part, a kind of rude familiarity, which you could not return, without offending them, and entirely forgetting yourself.

Ver. I see how requisite it is for every man to be moderate and unaffected, especially in my situation: you, sir, will deign to guide me still; and I flatter myself, with such an instructor, I shall never go astray: yet I am very young, I am but eighteen; and you have often told me that distrust of ourselves is, at my age, the first of virtues, and can alone preserve every other.—Why then

thus so soon expose me to the dangers of the world?—Why let me encounter them before my judgement is quite matured.

Oph. These modest fears do you honour; but are these your only motives for regret on leaving Champagne?—Why do you colour?

Ver. I am attached to this place, I acknowledge, sir—

Oph. Report says (but I can scarcely believe it) that Collette is the principal cause of your attachment.—I have too good an opinion of your morals and integrity to persuade myself with readiness that you, who should be the protector and example of these respectable villagers, you, whose father is their landlord, can have the infamous design of seducing a modest, virtuous young woman, and of bringing dishonour on a worthy family.

Ver. Alas, I have no design!—I respect her innocence—but own, I could not withstand the bewitching charms of her person.

Oph. Why has not reason triumphed over a culpable inclination, which can only disgrace you?

Ver. Disgrace me!—How so?—Do not beauty and virtue justify love?

Oph. What? Can you form the design of marrying Collette?

Ver. I again declare, that I have no design.—But, in fact, sir, there is not any real distinction between Collette and me. Can a citizen disgrace himself by marrying the daughter of an honest farmer?—She is handsome, she is discreet; and if I love her, and am beloved in return, what, in the eyes of reason, can make her unworthy of me?

Oph. Her want of education—and that is the truest and most striking inequality which can exist

exist among mankind. We ought to respect the distinctions established in the world; it is pride rather than philosophy which disdains them; the truly wise Man acknowledges them all; he is a friend to order, an exact observer of decorum, and he will never seem to despise the claims of birth and rank. I am well aware that nobility derives its advantage only from opinion, and therefore demands nothing on my part, except an outward homage, an empty form, as frivolous as itself; but true superiority, which commands esteem, impresses respect, and is acquired by understanding, knowledge, and accomplishments; in a word, that which education gives; for education brings the most unequal ranks upon a level by the charms of mutual converse, that most pleasing and useful tie which can unite mankind. This advantage, which neither depends on fashion nor compact, is possessed by you, Verceil, and will ensure to you that of being admitted into any company; indeed, prejudices apart, it renders you the equal of every thinking, reasonable being. Consequently you must perceive what a real disparity there is between yourself and Collette.—Say, would you choose for your friend and confident a mere ignoramus, destitute of sense and education, and equally unpolished both in language and behaviour?—Certainly not. And do you think the choice of a wife is less important? She, who is destined never to leave you; she, whose vices will be your dishonour, or whose virtues will constitute your glory; she, in short, who must bring up your children!—Woe to that man who, when about to form this respectable and indissoluble engagement, considers nothing but the transient charms of a fine person! Repentance of

flies

the bitterest sort, and the just contempt of mankind, will soon punish him for so culpable a folly. —But we are interrupted; let us resume this topick another time.

SCENE III.

OPHEMON, VERCEIL, PICARD.

Pic. (*To Ophemon.*) SIR, honest Eustace comes to speak with you.

Oph. What's his business?

Pic. I really don't know, sir; but he looks very sorrowful: and I just now met Collette all in tears—

Oph. Where is Eustace?

Pic. On the terrace.

Oph. Well, I'll go to him. [*He goes out.*

SCENE IV.

VERCEIL, PICARD.

Ver. HEAR me, Picard.—Did Collette speak to you?

Pic. Oh, yes—I am her confident—

Ver. How!—Well!—What did she say? Why did she weep?

Pic.

Pic. That I don't know; she never once chose to let me into the cause of her trouble.

Ver. But these secrets which she told you—

Pic. You have more to do with them than you think for, sir.

Ver. (*Agitated.*) What would you say?

Pic. Oh, no, she would not have confessed all to me, only she knew of your kindness to me, and that I had promised her my help.

Ver. (*With eagerness.*) Well, Picard, proceed.

Pic. I am going to tell you some simple things. —The poor girl's head is turned—but, for all this, she is as innocent and as artless as the child unborn—

Ver. (*With impatience,*) But to the point.

Pic. Well then, she has lost her little heart.

Ver. (*With great emotion,*) Is she in love?

Pic. Oh, if you knew how she blushed at confessing it!—how she twisted her apron, and made up the sweetest little mouth!—her eyes cast down, and the big tears shining through her long black eye-lashes.—I never thought her so pretty before! —She looked extraordinary handsome.

Ver. And—did she name—the person?—

Pic. Name him indeed!—Why, she would not have mentioned his name for a kingdom.—I questioned her, and she only answered now and then, speaking between her teeth, and very low; "Yes, monsieur Picard.—True, monsieur Picard.—Thank ye, monsieur Picard."

Ver. In short—

Pic. In short, you wish to know who the sweet-heart is, don't you, sir?—Faith, she has not a bad taste.—'Tis young Andrew—

Ver. Andrew!

Pic.

Pic. Yes, he who gained the prize to-day; a tall, brisk, well set young fellow, and the handsomeſt lad in the village: beſides, he is very good, very prudent, very regular—he never goes to a publick-houſe, but works from morning till night to maintain an old grand-mother, and two ſiſters, who live entirely upon him, and to whom he gives all his earnings: then, with this, he is in conſtant good humour, and he loves Colette to his very ſoul.

Ver. (*Recovering from a deep reverie.*) You are ſure ſhe likes Andrew?

Pic. Yes, faith, quite ſure—and both ſhe and Andrew flatter themſelves, ſir, that you will have the goodneſs to favour their paſſion—.

Ver. I hear the Chevalier: go, Picard, and acquaint Colette, that it ſhall be my buſineſs to make her happy.

Pic. Thank ye, ſir; thank ye kindly. I'll ſet off and tell this joyful news to our lovers.

[*He goes out.*

Ver. (*Alone.*) She loves Andrew! a clown!—Picard ſaid ſhe wept!—Andrew, without an effort, has won her heart, while my attentions were not even obſerved!—Oh, I perceive that love cannot exiſt without a ſympathy of minds!—I was miſtaken in my own ſentiments!—Happy am I in diſcovering ſo dangerous an errour before it has miſled me!

SCENE

SCENE V.

THE CHEVALIER, VERCEIL.

Che. HAH, Vercail! you are the very perſon I was looking for.——You have been in my thoughts ever ſince we parted.—I have ſeen Collette, and explained to her my plan of getting her to Paris; but you muſt talk with the girl yourſelf, for ſhe is as artleſs and as ſilly as ſhe is beautiful, and—

Ver. Let us ſay no more on the ſubject, I beſeech you; I have dropped all thoughts of Collette; my father has ſhewn me the inconveniences of ſo blameable a paſſion, and I moſt ſincerely renounce it.

Che. Indeed?

Ver. Nothing is more true.

Che. Well, if that's the caſe, Collette ſhall come to Paris on my account only; and I will take upon me to conſole her for your fickleneſs.

Ver. Her father will not give her leave to go, depend upon that.

Che. I can't ſay I mean to aſk his leave.

Ver. What, do you think of running away with Collette?

Che. Running away!—You make me ſmile—that phraſe cannot be applied to a little creature in her ſtation.—We run away with a woman of quality, but we *carry off* a country-girl.

Ver. In your opinion then, violence changes its name, when employed only against the weak?—I confess I think it is in such a case precisely that this abuse of power, and hope of escaping punishment, stamps the deed with meanness, which renders it still more atrocious.

Che. You are always in heroicks.—Why, Collette is not formed for a cottage life; I wish to bring her out, and to make her fortune—are these such atrocious crimes?—Besides, by the measures I shall pursue, she will no longer be subject to her father's authority; I shall get her entered on the Opera-list as a dancer.

Ver. A dancer!—Collette a dancer!—But you joke: how would she be received?—She cannot dance—

Che. No matter, this is done every day; 'tis a very ingenious method which has been devised of freeing a pretty girl from the capricious authority of obscure parents.—An opulent citizen would easily find means to redress himself, but can that be done by a poor rustick, equally ignorant and unpolished, and confined to his cottage for life?

Ver. No, I cannot believe that you speak seriously.

Che. 'Pon honour, I don't joke.—This custom of getting girls, who are ignorant of dancing, entered on the Opera-list, is perfectly well established, and that, as I told you, with a view of delivering them from the pursuit of their parents. I myself got two dancers received who never did two steps of a rigadoon in their lives; one is the daughter of a milk woman, and the other of a woman who letts out carriages—both these girls are burthened with the weight of fifteen

sixteen years, and a great deal of beauty; but they are less captivating and less blooming than Colette.

Ver. What, should government suffer vice and rebellion to have a certain asylum, an impenetrable refuge from paternal authority? Shall an unfortunate young creature of fifteen, a child misled by an infamous seducer, suffer herself to be brought on the Opera-stage, and shall not her unhappy mother have power to wrest her away? God, if it be true that an abuse so vile and disgraceful can exist, it is too shocking, it too evidently violates the most sacred rights of nature, not to be repressed by time.

Cher. You undoubtedly forget, *monsieur de* * *Verceil*, that this energetick declamation attacks me personally; true, indeed, it is not in the power of all this *pathos* either to shock or convert me; but, from the regard which I still have for you, I would wish to believe that the converse of the world will rub off that college pedantry, and make you more guarded in your expressions.

Ver. Too much warmth has transported me; and, perhaps, I may learn not to indulge it in an imprudent manner; but I hope I shall always retain the sentiments by which it is inspired.

Cher. There is one piece of knowledge which you should take especial pains to acquire, for it may serve instead of many others, and spare you some disagreeable mortifications—then learn to remember who you are—and to whom you speak.

* *De* before a proper name in French denotes a *nobleman* or *gentleman*.

Ver. I constantly recollect my birth, and never does it make me blush. I am the son of a tradesman, who, by his talents, his labours, and his probity, has acquired a large estate, and whose moderation and beneficence have entitled him to publick esteem, and even annihilated that base and secret envy with which poor and haughty nobles too often look upon the success of an upstart. Therefore, sir, when rage and resentment can reproach me with nothing but my birth, I shall be sheltered from their insults, and from all kind of humiliation. The blood which gave me life is not illustrious, but it is pure at least, and has transmitted into my heart a relish for morality, a love of virtue, and a detestation of vice and bad principles.

Che. Egad, *monsieur de Vercell*, this grows too ridiculous, too comick to provoke my anger.—You have a *copiousness* and an emphasis which really are surprizing!—I am by no means a match for you; but, I honestly confess, I can't remember one word of your long harangues, except your having *pure blood*, together with an invincible horrour of, and an excessive compassion for, the pretty dancers of fifteen—*those unfortunate young creatures*, as you call them!—This is charming—charming indeed!—Egad, with that style of talking, you may expect prodigious success at Paris—What a reformation you will make!—There will be no more *unfortunate young creatures*, I foresee that; and as for us debauchees, we shall be reviled and put to flight with shame.—Respecting myself, I am buffeted in a violent manner already—to retreat is my only remaining expedient, so I shall prudently adopt it.—Adieu, dear Vercell! I part without rancour, I protest, for you have given me

so good a story to tell, that I must excuse its singularity. *He advances in order to go out.*

Ver. (*Aside.*) How could such insipid and puerile irony ever appear poignant or witty?

SCENE VI.

OPHEMON, THE CHEVALIER, VERCEIL.

Oph. (*Stopping the Chevalier.*) PRAY, sir, have the goodness to indulge me with a moment's conversation.

Che. On what subject, monsieur Ophémon?

Oph. Concerning an affair which I should not take the liberty of mentioning to you, did not my son seem interested in it. Eustace, my farmer, just now came to tell me that you had made Collette an offer of carrying her to Paris, and getting her entered at the Opera-house, adding, that my son desired you to interfere in this business—

Ver. I, sir? I flatter myself you give no credit to it. The Chevalier made this strange proposal without consulting me, and when he told me of it, I did not scruple to acquaint him with my sentiments on the subject.

Che. (*Embarrassed.*) I protest I only meant to joke.—'Tis wonderful that this girl should be alarmed at my speaking a word to her *en passant*—from mere frolick—mere giddiness;—I did not think all I said of the smallest consequence—and even just now, I amused myself with teazing you, Verceil—but, really, 'twas quite a joke—pon honour it was; for, after all, I think

entirely as you do. Pray, monsieur Ophemon, remove the fears which Collette and her father may entertain respecting my pretended bad designs. Adieu, monsieur Ophemon; I will call again and enquire after your health before I leave this country.—Verceil, I hope we shall, at least, have one hunt together. (*He advances some steps, and Ophemon offers to attend him.*) What, are you in jest? I beg you won't mind me: ceremony should be banished among friends and neighbours.—Dear Verceil, your servant. [*He goes out.*

SCENE VII. and last.

OPHEMON, VERCEIL.

Ver. AT length, however, he is sensible of his faults, since he wishes to disown them; it was your respectable presence, my dear father, which put him to the blush. I am sorry you did not give him a little advice.

Oph. It would have been misplaced. To those who are not connected with us, we should give no advice but by example.

Ver. May I venture to ask whether Collette thought the Chevalier's proposal came from me, sir?

Oph. No, neither she nor her father could believe it; especially, as the Chevalier spoke only for himself, without mentioning you till towards the end of the conversation; nor did he then say you were in love with Collette. That young woman received his proposal with tears of insulted innocence, treated it with sovereign contempt, and instantly avowed the whole to her father.

Ver.

Ver. I find he loves Andrew; permit me, sir, to give the young man five hundred pounds, that Eustace may consent to their union.

Orb. (*Embracing Vercel.*) This is like my son! —You cannot do a more worthy action; and you will be rewarded by the felicity of two virtuous families—and by the sweet satisfaction with which this generosity inspires your happy father; I will share in it, and take upon me to provide wedding clothes, and to defray the expences of the nuptials. Let us go and announce this joyful news to the parties concerned; they are all still assembled in the gardens, and dancing there. Come, my dear Vercel. [*They go out.*

THE TWO RIVALS;

A

TRAGEDY.

THE PORTRAIT,

OR

THE GENEROUS RIVALS;

A DRAMA,

OF THREE ACTS.

THE PORTRAIT,

Persons of the Drama.

Madame DUCHEMIN.

DELPHINE, *her daughter.*

OPHEMON.

VERCEIL, *his son.*

CLEANTHUS, *friend to Madame Duchemin and Ophemon.*

The Marquis de LIMOURE, *friend to Verceil, and in love with Delphine.*

FANNY, *Madame Duchemin's servant.*

The Scene, Madame Duchemin's house at Paris.

THE PORTRAIT,

OR

THE GENEROUS RIVALS.

Ma chi può mai ſi ben diſſimular gli affetti ſui,
Che gli aſconda per ſempre occhi altrui?
Catone Metaſtaſe.

But who at ev'ry moment hath the art
To hide the warm affections of his heart?

The line ſhe trac'd with fond preciſion true,
And, drawing, doated on the form ſhe drew.
Hayley, Eſſay on Painting. T.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The Stage repreſents a Parlour.

OPHEMON, CLEANTHUS, FANNY.

Oph. (*To Fanny.*) SO, madame Duchemin and her daughter are gone out?

Fan. Yes, ſir, they have been out a matter of an hour already, therefore they'll ſoon be coming back.

Cle. Is not mademoiſelle Delphine gone to the Viſcountess de Germeuil's?

Fan. Yes; and thanks be praiſed, 'tis the laſt ſitting. That there Viſcountess does always tease mamoiſelle Delphine ſo! This is the third time ſhe has had her picture done over again; for ſhe could not fancy the two firſt, 'cauſe two peas aren't more like. You know her, monſieur Cleanthes?

Cle. Madame de Germeuil? yes, I was there at her firſt ſitting.

Fan. Well then, ſhe always kept ſaying; "The eyes are too ſmall, the mouth too wide, the ſkin too brown." Marry though, ſhe's quite contented this time, for mamoiſelle Delphine has made her ſo fair and ſo handſome, that no perſon living can know her; and this is what pleases the ladies; 'tis a comical whimſy of theirs. But I beg pardon, gentlemen—can I do nothing more for you?

Cle. No, Fanny; we give you thanks.

[*Fanny goes out.*

SCENE II.

OPHEMON, CLEANTHES.

Oph. (*Looking at his watch.*) I AM ſurpriſed that my ſon is not come yet; 'tis twelve o'clock—

Cle. Is he to ſit for his picture to Delphine?

Oph. Yes; and I fancy this laſt ſitting may clear up more than one of my doubts.

Cle.

Cle. [illegible]

Oph. Can you, my dear Cleanthus, who have lived in this house ten years, you, the neighbour and friend of madame Duoberlin and her charming daughter, can you have failed to observe things which even struck me in the freshest manner?

Cle. Hah! can you suspect Verceil of being too much attached to Delphine?

Oph. What think you on that subject?

Cle. Why, for some time, and especially the last three months, he has been very pensive, very melancholy!—then Delphine is so interesting, she possesses so much beauty, genius, and goodness!—But still, could your son resolve to become the rival of his intimate friend, of the Marquis de Limours?

Oph. That passion, unworthy of her who inspired it, was nothing more than a culpable error.

Cle. True, the Marquis, susceptible and generous, but haughty and violent, presumed at first to conceive injurious hopes; he insulted the virtuous object of his adoration, he incurred her contempt and hatred, and admittance into this house was denied him. Afterwards, he flattered himself, and for a considerable time, that pride, prejudices, and resentment, might triumph over love; nevertheless, you know that being disgusted with pleasure and dissipation, and a prey to the most profound melancholy, he shuns the world, and tastes no joy but in the company of Verceil: this conduct seems to prove him still Delphine's lover. Time and reflection erase a transient fancy, but engrave a real passion still more deeply on the heart: and could Verceil, the Marquis's confident,

confident, Verceil, who for five years has been his bosom friend, in short, Verceil, who is so generous, so noble, so delicate, could he secretly betray him, and become his rival?—No, I can't believe it.

Oph. I am charmed to find you have such an opinion of my son, dear Cleanthus; and, indeed, I flatter myself he justifies it. Notwithstanding the great difference of rank between Verceil (the son of a tradesman retired from business) and the Marquis de Limours, still, the similarity of their minds and education, gave birth to a friendship, so much the more solid, because it was neither the effect of chance, nor the trifling conveniences of society, but sprang from sympathy and esteem.—My son has the sincerest, the tenderest attachment to the Marquis, for whom there is no sacrifice he would hesitate to make; but, after all, the Marquis and Delphine never can be united: my son ought to exhort his friend, even for reputation-sake, to triumph over a passion which reason condemns, and will, sooner or later, extinguish. With these ideas, would not Verceil be excusable, if (though involuntarily no doubt) he secretly loved Delphine? This passion is only weakness in the Marquis; but my son may indulge it without offending decorum, or the prejudices—

Cle. I own you surprise me. Delphine, 'tis true, is the offspring of worthy parents, and was born, indeed, to enjoy a happier lot; she received the most distinguished education, but fatal misfortunes plunged her into distress; she has nothing, her talent for painting is become her sole resource; and your son will have upwards of four thousand a year!—

Orb. Can he make a better use of wealth than by offering it to virtuous indigence, to beauty heightened with all the lustre of accomplishments? It is to accident I owe the chief part of an estate, half of which would have been more than sufficient to satisfy my wishes. For twenty years I have relinquished commerce, and made no ventures. I knew how to stop and set bounds to ambition, which is, perhaps, of all virtues, the most rare in men of my class, if they are fortune's favourites. Had riches opened my soul to insatiable desires, they would have robbed me of that pure delight I now enjoy, of inward peace, the sweet, the precious fruit of moderation, that inestimable treasure which constantly preserves us from the shameful errours of covetousness, and from the humiliating intoxication which prosperous and splendid fortune may produce. I have upwards of four thousand a year, what then remains to be wished for Verceil? A great alliance?—No; a rich citizen, by marrying a girl of quality, endangers his happiness without adding to his personal consequence:—therefore, the wife whom, from my heart, I should desire for my son, would be a young woman suitable to him in birth, distinguished by her accomplishments, graces, and virtues, and rendered still more interesting by distress of circumstances.—How great is the happiness of being able at once to draw unknown merit from obscurity, to shield innocence from the enterprizes of vice, and to reward a worthy youth by uniting him with an amiable companion, whose justly-founded gratitude would be the certain pledge of a lively and permanent affection!

Gi-

Cle. Sentiments like these render you truly deserving of that respect and universal esteem which you enjoy!—Delphine is quite the person you are searching for, and would, undoubtedly, interest you a thousand times more, did you know as much of her as I do.

Opb. I have studied her attentively during this year passed, and am equally charmed with her disposition and understanding: the sensibility and elevation of mind by which she is distinguished, her tender respect for her mother, her meekness and evenness of temper, in short, all her virtues are known to me; there is but one thing which retards my designs—

Cle. What, the Marquis's passion?

Opb. No, for I am sure he will renounce it: but I could wish, before I declare myself, to be certain that Delphine would prefer my son to every other; and I own my observations hitherto have all been ineffectual.—Yet, I think, I have sometimes remarked that Verceil's looks embarrassed Delphine, and I have often seen her blush while speaking to him; but, perhaps, I might mistake the amiable bashfulness which springs from modesty, for the involuntary agitation of love.—I want signs which are less equivocal, more certain—in short, I have a scheme of setting her to paint my son's picture; for, if she loves him, can she sustain that trial without betraying herself? When obliged to study his countenance for a whole hour, will not her eyes, at some moment, disclose the sentiments of her heart?

Cle. I own your idea to me appears excellent; and were not the end so good a one, I should deem the means as treacherous as they are ingenious. But say, you think Verceil in love

with Delphine, and do you imagine he can love without hope?

Ope. Verceil, absolutely exempt from every species of presumption, is as diffident as he is susceptible; therefore, although the most tender return were granted him, (short of an explicit avowal,) I believe he would not be satisfied with it. Yet it is possible that some particular circumstances may have acquainted him with Delphine's sentiments, and this, you might discover more easily than I could: he places confidence in you, besides, he is sensible that you who have known Delphine from her birth, consider her with paternal regard; and doubtless, if he ventures to open his heart, it will not be difficult for you to discover all its secrets.

Cle. Well, I'll question him this very day, I promise you, provided an opportunity offers.—Hark! don't I hear his voice?

Ope. Yes, 'tis he; and, as Delphine is not yet returned, profit by the moment, speak to him; I will go and wait for you in your own apartment, to come and join me there.

Cle. Very well; but go through the little closet, that you may not meet Verceil.

Ope. Your servant——for he is coming.

[*He goes out.*

Cle. (*Alone.*) Oh, he has got into a chat with Fanny, which may last a long while; Fanny is a girl who will never let an opportunity of talking escape her.—Hah! here he comes, notwithstanding.

SCENE

SCENE III.

CLEANTHUS, VERCEIL.

Ver. IS not my father here?

Cle. He had buſineſs to do, and is gone; but he will return to be preſent at the firſt ſitting for your picture.

Ver. Have you ſeen madame Duchemin to-day, ſir?

Cle. Yes, for a moment in the morning.

Ver. What a reſpectable woman madame Duchemin is!—So good, ſo tender a mother!—

Cle. And the more reſpectable becauſe her indigence reſults merely from her integrity. Though not bound to pay her deceaſed huſband's debts, ſhe, by choice, diſcharged them all—and though accuſtomed to affluence, ſhe accommodates herſelf to poverty, which ſhe ſupports with equal fortitude and greatneſs of mind.—I ſee how compaſſionate you are, dear Verceil; this account moves and affects you—

Ver. I don't deny it. Why ſhould we hide a concern ſo tender as that which ſuffering virtue ought to inſpire? Yes, I own, and I pride myſelf in it, I have the ſincereſt reſpect and affection for madame Duchemin—to prove which, there is nothing I would not do—

Cle. And Delphine!—you don't mention her.—Are you ſenſible only of the mother's virtues? have thoſe of the daughter made no impreſſion on you?

you?—How you colour!—What, is this question very embarrassing?

Ver. A supposed attachment frequently embarrasses more than the truth.—I guess your thoughts—and am grieved that you should suspect me of being a traitor to friendship.

Cle. What! do you allude to the Marquis? But his passion is only an affront to Delphine.

Ver. Yet, if love should at length triumph over the prejudices—

Cle. How! is it possible for him to entertain a thought of marrying Delphine?—Could he resolve thus to brave the publick opinion, and the resentment of his family?

Ver. Delphine herself will obtain his pardon: who can know her, and not excuse the faults which she occasions?

Cle. But if Delphine, insensible to ambition, preferred to the Marquis another person, more amiable in her eyes!—

Ver. (*With eagerness.*) What do you say?—How!—Could you be informed?—Could she tell you?

Cle. I know nothing. I am entirely unacquainted with the situation of her heart.

Ver. (*Aside.*) Alas, how great was my errour, my mad presumption!—I ventured to believe for an instant—Oh, what a wretch am I!

Cle. Then you think the Marquis, if his sentiments were worthy of Delphine, might be able to please her?

Ver. Does he not deserve to be beloved?—Birth, fortune, knowledge, accomplishments, and goodness, all unite in him.—His mind is as noble,

ble, as generous even as Delphine's, his under ſtanding cultivated and refined like her own; he poſſeſſes almoſt all her talents.—In ſhort, Delphine and the Marquis ſeem formed for each other—and ſpite of caprice, and the injuſtice of chance and fortune, by which they are ſeparated, ſuch a conformity in advantages ſo rare and ſo real, baniſhes every chimerical diſtinction, and muſt, ſooner or later, bring together and indiſſolubly unite them.

SCENE IV.

CLEANTHUS, VERCEIL, FANNY.

Fan. (*Carrying an eaſel.*) BY your leave, gentlemen——I muſt place all this here tackle ready.

Cle. Aye, get every thing in order for the ſitting, Fanny.—Verceil, adieu!—I am going for a moment to my own apartment. (*Aſide.*) Now let me rejoin Ophémon, and give him an account of this converſation. [*He goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

VERGEIL. FANNY.

Ver. (*aside.*) HOW shall I summon courage to execute this painful commission!—He wishes to see her again, to speak with her.—She will readily consent, for I am sure she secretly loves him. —Oh, heaven!—

Fan. (*As she arranges the easel, the canvass, and the colours.*) And, sir, if it an't impertinent, sir—is it your picture that's a going to be painted?

Ver. Yes, my dear Fanny.

Fan. Oh, I'll answer for't, mamesselle Delphine will hit you off to a charm—

Ver. She paints so well!—Has she never done her own portrait?

Fan. Lack-a-day!—then you don't know?

Ver. Know what?

Fan. (*Coming up to him with an air of secrecy.*) Aye, aye, she has done it, sure enough.—She'd a picture to paint for a church, (for 'tis only this last year that she has worked at portraits;) so that not being able to find a saint to her liking, she e'en took off her own face, and popped it down rough on a little bit of canvass; but behold a gentleman casts a sheep's eye at this, as it hung in her closet, and was bent upon having it; so the girl who lived here before me gave it to him, for

for I can't tell how much money.—Oh, mameſelle Delphine was ſtung to the quick; the girl got turned off; and, owing to that affair, I came by the place, 'cauſe madame Duchemin knew me; for I am couſin to mameſelle Delphine's foſter-ſiſter.—So this is the ſtory.—I an't given to talk, but I've ſeen a deal more, though 'tis only eight months neither, ſince I came to live here.—Now mameſelle gets cuſtom, things mend; but before ſhe was known, what a deal ſhe did ſuffer!—In her mother's laſt illneſs!—Mercy upon us!—ſhe worked day and night for money to pay the doctor and ſurgeon; painting, in the day-time, and when night came, copying muſick, or doing pieces of embroidery, which I carried next morning to ſell—and with all this, as ſweet-tempered, as compoſed, as if nothing had been the matter.—"Mameſelle, (ſays I) you'll kill yourſelf,"—"No, no, (ſays ſhe) 'tis done to help my mother, and that can't tire me!"

Ver. What a recital!—What particulars!—

Fan. Somebody knocks, I believe.—'Tis her, I dare ſay. (*She cries*;) Coming. [*She runs out.*

Ver. (*Alone.*) Oh, Delphine!—incomparable girl!—Bleſſed, a thouſand times bleſſed, is the man who can offer you rank and fortune equal to your merit!—My heart is oppreſſed—my tears flow involuntarily—and yet I am confident that Delphine's happineſs will conſole me for every thing.—Somebody comes—Hah!—'tis ſhe.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

VERCEIL, MADAME DUCHEMIN, DELPHINE.

Mad. Duc. EXCUSE us, sir, for having made you wait.—But your father is not come; though he, no doubt, is in Cleanthus's apartment: I am going to send there—

Ver. First, madam, allow me the honour of conversing with you for a moment.

Del. Should I retire?

Ver. No, mademoiselle—you ought to be present during this explanation.

Del. (Aside.) He seems confounded.—What is he going to say?

Mad. Duc. Well, sir?—

Ver. (Aside.) I tremble.—*(Aloud.)* I am embarrassed, I confess—and apprehensive of your distrust—your anger—

Mad. Duc. You astonish me.—Why, what's the matter?

Del. (Aside.) How I am agitated!

Ver. May I flatter myself, madam, that my character is known to you, and that you will neither doubt my probity, nor my sincerity?

Del. (Aside.) Oh, how shall I disguise the lively emotions of my heart!

Mad. Duc. I am persuaded that you will always justify the opinion I have conceived of your prudence,

prudence, and of your ſentiments——therefore explain yourſelf, I conjure you, ſir.

Ver. You, madam, know the ſincerity of that friendſhip which unites me to the Marquis de Lemours: the unwilling confident of his errours, I was ſenſibly affected by his wrongs to you, and could not, without deep regret, ſee my friend diſgrace himſelf, unconſcious of the virtue he inſulted. During his long baniſhment from your preſence, your ſcorn has puniſhed, but it has not cured him. What aſſiſtance was he to expect from reaſon againſt a paſſion which ſhe could only refine, not deſtroy!—What am I ſaying? ſhe has but augmented its violence—

Del. (*Aſide.*) Oh, heaven! What do I hear?—Alas, how much I was miſtaken!

Ver. In ſhort, madam, I dare anſwer now, for the rectitude of his intentions—(*Aſide.*) I am unable to go on!

Mad. Duc. Really, ſuch a change cannot fail to ſurprize us!

Ver. (*Aſide, looking at Delphine.*) Delphine!—She colours! ſhe ſeems affected!—Ah, I foreſaw this!

Mad. Duc. (*To Verceil.*) What are his deſigns, his hopes?

Ver. He conjures you to hear him.—He has written to you, madam, but you return all his letters unopened—and ſeeing him in deſpair, I conſented to ſpeak to you.—(*Aſide.*) What diſgraceful weakneſs!—My tears are going to betray me!—

Mad. Duc. Speak, daughter—'tis for you to reply—

Del

Del. (*Eagerly.*) [illegible] I hesitate—(*To Vernon.*) Sir, tell that friend, to you so very dear—that [illegible] who has insulted me so [illegible], tell him, I can neither pardon, nor see him.—These are my real sentiments, this is my fixed resolve.

Ver. (*Aside.*) What eagerness! what warmth! Oh, this is the language of resentment, not indifference!—

Del. And respecting yourself, sir, deign, I beseech you, to have so much regard for me as never to mention his name in my presence.

Ver. I perceive you question his sincerity, mademoiselle, and yet—

Del. Enough; allow me to put an end to this conversation. You desired an answer, I have given one, do me the favour of repeating it, word for word, to your friend.

Ver. You command—I must obey.—(*Aside, in going.*) Alas, I don't know what to think, nor how to unravel what passes in my soul!

[*He goes out.*

SCENE VII.

MADAME DUCHEMIN, DELPHINE.

Mad. Duc. SO much warmth surprizes me, daughter.—Why this abrupt refusal? If the Marquis's intentions are really honourable, what should prevent your hearing him at least?

Del. No, madam; 'tis a new ſnare, a vile artifice, be aſſured.—This man ſeems born only to importune and torment me!—he becomes my averſion—I own I cannot, with temper, hear him named.—When will his perſecutions ceaſe?—How inſupportable he is to me! how I hate him!

Mad. Duc. What, are you acquainted with hatred, Delphine?—and is that horrid paſſion made for your boſom?—Why, even when the Marquis employed all his powers of invention to ſeduce you, diſdain was your only revenge; then you ſhewed nothing but a calm and cold contempt—and now that he aſſures you of his repentance, and you are given to underſtand that he conſents to place you on a level with himſelf, why this agitation, theſe violent tranſports?

Del. Place me on a level with himſelf!—no, never, never—

Mad. Duc. No, Delphine!—'Tis his deſign, I have not a doubt of it: after all, he is eight and twenty, he is his own maſter, and he loves you paſſionately; then who can hinder his marrying you?—Will he wound honour by uniting himſelf with ſo many virtues?—Yes, heaven ordains you to this ſplendid fortune, I feel the happy preſage.—What now, Delphine?—In tears!—I am unable to comprehend you!

Del. No, happineſs is not made for me!—I renounce it!

Mad. Duc. Alas, my child, hitherto, indeed, you have only known adverſity; and yet this is the firſt time you have given me the heart-felt grief of hearing you bewail your lot.

Del.

Del. Oh, madam! let my life glide away under your protection—let me ever continue in that obscurity which befits me—let my mother grant me her indulgence—let me preserve her love—and then I can bear any thing!

Mad. Duc. What a state you are in, my dear girl!—What is the meaning of these bitter tears, of this dreadful agitation which overcomes you?—Shall I own, Delphine, that I think you deceive yourself respecting your sentiments for the Marquis—you dare not depend on his sincerity, and this doubt produces uneasiness and fears which could not be so lively if you were indifferent—

Del. I, in love with him!—Oh, heaven!—

Mad. Duc. Every thing tends to convince me of it. From the time he ceased to visit here, a secret grief has preyed upon you, and seems daily to augment.—Now, hope is dawning; but till now, Delphine, how could you give way to so dangerous a passion? Ought you to have kept your mother, your friend, ignorant of its fatal progress?—Should you have neglected to ask her counsels?

Del. Your counsels!—Oh, doubtless they are dear to me! Without their aid I should always err—

Mad. Duc. Then timidity alone prevented your having recourse to them?

Del. What cause but that could limit the confidence you are entitled to from me?

Mad. Duc. Therefore, Delphine, you allow that my conjectures are well-founded, and that the Marquis is not indifferent to you?

Del. He!—No, madam, you deceive yourself.—(*Aside.*) How can she be so mistaken!

Mad. Duc. This denial is mere whim—but we will ſay no more on the ſubject; juſt now you are not yourſelf; let our converſation drop, we will reſume it in the evening.—'Tis late, let us ſit down to table; for as Verceil is gone away, you cannot begin his picture till after dinner. Come, my dear.

Del. (Aſide, in going.) One moment longer, and I ſhould have acknowledged all!

[*They go out.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE the First.

DELPHINE, FANNY.

Del. WHERE are my colours?

Fan. Here, mameſelle, and the canvaſs along with them.

Del. This canvaſs is too coarſe, theſe colours are good for nothing; go into my cloſet and look for others.

Fan. Well though, they be the very ſame as what you painted that Viſcounteſs with—

Del. How now! Do as I bid you.

Fan. Aha, I have it; you want to conjure up ſomewhat vaſt fine indeed.—Forſooth, monſieur

and works. Ophémon and Cleanthus remain ſtanding, and go ſometimes behind Delphine, and ſometimes behind Verceil.)

(*After a ſhort ſilence.*)

Cle. (*In a low voice to Ophémon.*) Do obſerve Delphine—ſee how her hand ſhakes.

Oph. (*In a low voice to Cleanthus.*) She has not yet ventured to look up at Verceil!

Cle. (*Aloud.*) You are amazingly tedious in mixing your colours, mademoiſelle.

Del. (*Confuſed.*) True—'tis becauſe—becauſe it is ſo cold to-day—my fingers are numbed—

Cle. Indeed, your hand does not ſeem quite ſteady!

Del. I am always ſo.—(*Aſide.*) I don't know what I ſay!

Cle. How! does your hand always ſhake?—I never yet remarked it.

Mad. Duc. (*As ſhe works.*) Fie, child! what ſtories you are telling!—Come, no more of this.

Del. (*Aſide.*) I cannot conquer my embarraſſment!—Oh, what have I undertaken! (*She begins to paint.*)

(*After a long ſilence.*)

Oph. Son, do ſhake off that languiſhing air; your picture will make a rueful appearance.—Pray order him to ſmile, mademoiſelle—

Del. I would not conſtrain the gentleman—beſides, it ſeems to me quite natural that he ſhould not appear cheerful; 'tis ſo dull to ſit for one's picture!—

Ver Dull! what a word! when I look at you, mademoiſelle, and have the honour to engage your attention!

Cle.

Cle. Well ſaid, here's gallantry!—Mademoiſelle, no doubt, is a charming object to look at, and there is ſomething extremely agreeable in fixing her attention by any means; but yet it muſt be allowed that to remain thus without motion for a whole hour is not particularly amuſing—and as a proof of it, dear Verceil, you have changed countenance twenty times ſince you ſat there.

Oph. (*Viewing the picture.*) Come and look, Cleanthus; indeed, I already ſee a likeneſs in this ſketch.

Cle. Yes—a ſtrong one.

Oph. That gives me ſuch pleaſure!—I am very anxious about this picture, becauſe I intend it for my future daughter in law—and I hope I ſhall be able to make the preſent before ſix months are—

Ver. Six months, ſir!—

Oph. Aye, I very well know that you don't wiſh to be married.—He has ſuch indifference!—ſuch inſenſibility!—yet I ought to do him juſtice, five or ſix years ago I ſaw him in love—

Ver. Who, I?

Oph. Yes, yes, and deeply ſmitten too; 'twas a firſt paſſion, and that is the only real one—

Ver. A paſſion!—

Mad. Duc. What's the matter, Delphine?

Del. Madam—I have loſt my pencil.—Oh, here it is.

Ver. A paſſion!—What a name, ſir, do you give to a ſlight emotion of preference which only laſted a moment!—Yes, I am firmly perſuaded we love but once during life—and that can only be when reaſon ſeconds the choice of the heart.

Oph. Pray endeavour to ſpeak without quite ſo much geſticulation; you ſit ſo ill that mademoiſelle has done nothing for the laſt minute but blot out.

Cle. (*Viewing the picture.*) The likeneſs comes on ſurprizingly!—But don't you think the eyes rather too large, mademoiſelle?

Oph. (*To Delphine.*) Upon the whole, it ſeems to me a very flattering likeneſs of my ſon. Are you not of my opinion?

Del. I paint him as I ſee him.

Mad. Duc. (*Looking at the picture.*) It has quite his expreſſion of countenance.—Indeed, for one ſitting, the picture is ſurprizing.—But what can Fanny want?

SCENE III.

MADAME DUCHEMIN, OPHEMON, DELPHINE, VERCEIL, CLEANTHUS, FANNY.

Fan. MADAM, madam!—

Mad. Duc. What's the matter?

Fan. Here's the Marquis de Limours, who would come in, ſpite of me—

Del. (*Riſing.*) How!— [*They all riſe.*

Fan. Look, here he is.

[*Fanny puts the eaſel into a corner, and then goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

MADAME DUCHEMIN, ORPHEMON, DELPHINE, CLEANTHUS, VERCEIL, THE MARQUIS.

Ver. (*Aſide.*) OH, heaven!

Mar. (*Aſide.*) I ſcarcely dare approach!

(*Delphine offers to go, and the Marquis catches hold on her gown.*)

Mar. Stay, mademoiſelle, ſtay!—deign to hear me for a moment!

Del. What means this violence?

Mar. Violence!—Oh, are you not ſure of my ſubmiſſion?—I come hither merely to make you the arbitreſs of my fate; in ſhort, to receive ſuch laws as you ſhall pleaſe to preſcribe.

Del. Well, ſir—detain me no longer—follow me not, but forget me. (*She goes out.*

Mar. What ſcorn!—(*To madame Duchemin.*) And you, madam, will you likewiſe refuſe to hear me?

Mad. Duc. Permit me, ſir, to go and join my daughter. (*She goes out.*

SCENE IV.

THE MARQUIS, OPHEMON, VERCEIL, CLEANTHUS.

Mar. AH, Verceil! what ought I to do?

Ver. You were very imprudent in coming hither.

Mar. Dear Cleanthus—Monsieur Ophémon, advise me—

Cle. I advise you, sir, to renounce Delphine—

Mar. Renounce her!—I cannot!

Oph. But what are your intentions?

Mar. To do any thing for her.—Speak to her, I conjure you—

Oph. The regard I have always professed for your family, sir, as well as for yourself, must prevent my taking a step contrary to your credit and real interest.

Mar. Then I have no hope left but in you, monsieur Cleanthus!

Cle. Delphine, I must beg leave to say, seems so strongly prejudiced against you, sir, that I cannot undertake such a commission.

Mar. To whom then shall I address myself?

Oph. Consult reason only; reason alone should guide us, and reason has power to console us for the sacrifices she enjoins. Come, Cleanthus.

[*He goes out, followed by Cleanthus.*

SCENE

SCENE VI.

VERCEIL, THE MARQUIS.

Mar. NOW, Verceil, am I sufficiently humbled, degraded!—

Ver. Delphine retains the liveliest resentment against you, and I told you so—

Mar. But when I offer to make amends for my faults and my injustice, when I submissively implore the trifling favour of a moment's conversation, to treat me with so much contempt!—Did you observe her, Verceil? What disdainful looks she darted at me! She commands me to flee from her, to forget her.—Yes, I ought to do it: vanity, reason, every thing tells me that I ought.—But I cannot live without her.—The tedious absence I imposed upon myself has only served to prove the invincible power of that unhappy passion by which I am governed!—I see you weep, dear Verceil—you sigh at the shameful humiliation of an unfortunate friend.—Ah, he assured this generous pity at least softens my woes!

Ver. I pity you, indeed!—Oh, I can imagine all the agonies of your tortured heart!—Well, let us go, let us leave Paris.—I am ready to attend you.—I have perceived your scheme of visiting Italy; let us set off—the relaxation of a long journey may, perhaps, restore you to your-

for three years, the moſt amiable and virtuous of women; nothing has had power to tear her from my heart; I yield to this delightful inclination; and who can be barbarous enough to condemn me, or, at leaſt, to refuſe me indulgence?

Ver. But by making ſo unequal an alliance you ſet the moſt dangerous example—

Mar. Unequal alliances never were more common: if Delphine, though ſtill lower in point of birth, were poſſeſſed of eight thouſand a year, and even had not one of thoſe charms by which ſhe is diſtinguiſhed, what man of the higheſt rank would refuſe to marry her?—Well then, I ſhall do, from an enthuſiaſm for talents and virtues, what ſo many others would, from the mere love of money.—However, let us talk no more on this ſubject, dear Verceil; I do not aſk you to adviſe, but to ſerve me, and that in a buſineſs on which all the happineſs of my life depends.

Ver. (*Aſide.*) Oh, what a painful trial!

Mar. Then promiſe me that you will ſee Delphine, that you will ſpeak to her this very day—

Ver. No—I cannot reſolve upon it—

Mar. But—prejudice apart, do you blame my choice?

Ver. I, blame it!—Oh, Delphine is deſerving of the ſacrifice you wiſh to make her!

Mar. (*With emotion.*) Do you think ſhe hates me—and that her heart is pre-engaged?

Ver. If I had thought ſo, I would have warned you of it: no, ſhe, I am perſuaded, will receive your offers with equal ſenſibility and gratitude.

Mar.

Mar. Well then, as you find my reſolution is not to be ſhaken, what can hinder you from ſerving me?

Ver. Perhaps—any other perſon—might ſpeak better than I—

Mar. (*With ſurprize.*) How!—Verceil—you are agitated.—Good heaven! what is it you hint at?—I could ſubdue my inclinations—I could even ſacrifice myſelf to friendſhip!—but if I were deceived, betrayed!—

Ver. Betrayed!—Can ſuch a ſuſpicion enter your mind, and dare your lips utter it?

Mar. Oh, forgive me!—Diſtruſt, that cowardly impulſe of mean ſouls, does not belong to my temper, and you are ſenſible of it.—But my head is turned—I am no longer myſelf.—Oh, deign to excuſe the culpable imprudence of a momentary tranſport! Yes, I know you, and reſign my fate into your hands—

Ver. The cruel word which eſcaped you calls for an explanation, and you ſhall have one. I never obſerved that Delphine entertained the ſmalleſt preference for me, and am very ſure ſhe cannot think ſhe has made the ſlighteſt impreſſion on my heart; I ardently deſire her happineſs and yours, and can affirm the truth of what I ſay by all the oaths—

Mar. Enough—even this explanation was unneceſſary; could there be any need of it with me, dear Verceil?—Will not a word, a ſingle word from you, always ſuffice to diſpel my fears, and reſtore the confidence I owe to that delicacy and ſtrict rectitude which have made me unalterably yours?—Come, my friend, grant me pardon; and to prove that my influence over you is undiminiſhed, promiſe to ſpeak to Delphine—

Ver.

Ver. But can I, after having been ſuſpected?—

Mar. Oh, were you my ſecret rival, I could truſt you!

Ver. You would not deceive yourſelf—but ſee Cleanthus again; perhaps he may conſent—

Mar. No, he refuſed; my only hope is in you; beſides, after what has juſt paſſed between us, I derive infinite pleaſure from giving you this proof of confidence—

Ver. (*Aſide.*) Oh, Delphine!—

Mar. Speak—reply my friend.

Ver. We forget where we are.—Let us go; come home with me—give me time for conſideration.

Mar. Away then, dear Verceil.—I will not leave you till I have obtained this affecting proof of your friendſhip.

Ver. (*Aſide, in going.*) Alas, to what an extremity am I reduced! [*They go out.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE the First.

DELPHINE, *alone.*

AT length I am alone!—Under what dreadful restraint have I spent this day!—every moment on the point of betraying myself!—And Verceil!—was it possible for my excessive agitation to escape his notice?—Oh, yes, he is ignorant of all I have suffered—indifference observes nothing. (*She seats herself opposite to Verceil's portrait.*) For some time passed especially, I have felt an oppression on my spirits, a sadness, which almost wholly takes the use of reason from me.—(*She looks at the picture.*) How ill I have represented his features!—Those are not like his eyes, his speaking eyes, which so well express all the virtues of his soul!—(*She takes up her pencils and paints.*) What an affection he has for his father!—for his friend!—Can he then love no other

other perſon?—(*She continues painting.*) And yet to-day, in this very place, methought I twice obſerved that he was ſoftened while looking at me!—Perhaps he may have diſcovered my ſecret, perhaps he pities me!—What could I obtain nothing from him but a mortifying compaſſion!——Oh, ſooner may he always remain ignorant of an unhappy attachment which I would abjure, which I could ſurmount, rather than be expoſed to the inſupportable diſtreſs of bluſhing for it in his ſight!—Oh, if he thinks himſelf beloved, I will deſtroy that idea—yes, I ſhall find reſolution!—There's ſomebody coming—let me wipe away my tears.—Hah!—'tis he!

SCENE II.

DELPHINE, VERCEIL.

Delphine, *riſing in conſternation, and ſpeaking aſide.*

HOW can I prevent his knowing that I was employed about him—that I was weeping!

Ver. (*Aſide.*) There ſhe is!—Heaven grant me fortitude to keep my promiſe! [*He ſighs.*

Del. I muſt ſend away this picture!—Fanny!—Fanny!

Ver. (*Aſide.*) She ſeems hurried—diſturbed.—(*He advances.*) Pardon me, mademoiſelle—

Del. (*Aſide, turning her face from him.*) Fanny!—She does not come, let me go.—My legs tremble—I can't ſupport myſelf— [*She ſinks into her chair.*

Ver. Good heaven!—What is the matter?—How pale you look!

Del. 'Tis nothing—I thought—I believed, when you

you entered, that I heard the voice of the Marquis de Limours, and—

Ver. Can his voice cauſe ſuch violent emotion! [*He muſes.*

Fan. (*Entering.*) Here am I, mameſelle; did not you call?

Del. (*Riſing.*) Yes—carry away the eaſel.

Fan. (*Looking at the picture.*) Aha! you have been working at this again.

Del. Do go—

Fan. Here's the eyes quite finiſhed.——Dear heart, 'tis as like the gentleman now, as if 'twas ſpit out of his mouth—

Del. (*With impatience.*) Fanny, begone, I ſay.

Fan. (*Aſide, taking up the eaſel.*) Why ſure ſhe has trod on nettles to-day, for I never ſaw her ſcold ſo before. [*She goes out.*

Del. (*Aſide.*) He muſes—let me try to fathom his thoughts, and to learn whether I have removed his ſuſpicions. (*Aloud.*) The terrour I diſcovered ſeemed to ſurprize you, ſir; but when you reflect on the behaviour of monſieur de Limours—

Ver. (*With affected indifference.*) I, mademoiſelle!—I am not ſurprized.

Del. I ought to hate him, you know it—

Ver. Hate him!—I have not any pretenſions to your confidence, mademoiſelle—yet, at the ſame time, I did preſume to flatter myſelf I had done nothing which ſhould have made you reſolve to deceive me.

Del. How!—

Ver. Hatred, in a heart like yours, cannot produce ſuch tumultuous agitations.—I am acquainted with thoſe lively, thoſe deep emotions, I have felt

felt them but too often!——Yet I could never hate.—

Del. (*Aſide.*) What do I hear!—he has loved—he ſtill loves no doubt.—Ah! who is it?—

Ver. In ſhort, mademoiſelle, I congratulate myſelf on having diſcovered your ſecret.—I was charged with a commiſſion which embarraſſed me—I accoſted you with fear——now——I am reaſſured—

Del. What are you going to ſay?

Ver. (*In a low, weak voice.*) That the Marquis de Limours adores you, and that he offers you his hand—

Del. (*Aſide.*) He turns pale!—he colours!—Oh, what am I to think?——

Ver. He does not even deſire a ſecret marriage—he glories in his love.—At laſt I have executed my commiſſion.—(*Aſide.*) Now I may go and hide my weakneſs and deſpair. [*He advances to go out.*

Del. So, you don't wait for my anſwer?

Ver. Alas, I gueſs it.

Del. (*Aſide.*) His eyes are filled with tears!—No, I am not miſtaken.!

Ver. (*Aſide.*) What pure and lively joy has, within this moment, animated all her features!—Let me fly from a ſight which kills me!

Del. Stop—

Ver. Oh, why am I detained?

Del. My ſituation is embarraſſing—doubt—and uncertainty diſturb me ſtill.

Ver. It is pleaſant, I imagine, to hear the repetition of an aſſurance which delights us.—Well then, you are beloved, mademoiſelle, in a degree proportionable to your merit.

Del. (*Aſide.*) His vexation is evident, 'tis no fancy.—(*Aloud.*) How ſhould I determine? What do you adviſe?—

Ver.

Ver. (*Impetuously.*) I, adviſe!—Oh, this is too much!——(*More calmly.*) Are you not determined?—Then why this artifice which diſgraces you?—Why ſeek to conceal an inclination equally rational and laudable?

Del. Indeed, I have no artifice.—I could wiſh to make you acquainted with my ſentiments—but a proper reſerve prevents me from ſpeaking plainly—

Ver. Put no force upon yourſelf——ſuch an avowal would be ſuperfluous—

Del. And yet, I muſt think——that you would have ſome pleaſure in hearing it——

Ver. (*With extreme conſtraint.*) I am—indeed—ſenſible—as far as I poſſibly can be, of the Marquis's happineſs—but reſpecting that, mademoiſelle, you do not leave me a ſingle doubt.—I am going to him, and will ſend him to you—

Del. Send him to me!—Oh, no—

Ver. He is in Cleanthus's apartment, waiting for my return.

Del. (*After a little recollection.*) Well, let him come—I will ſpeak to him—

Ver. Aye, I foreſaw this!—Adieu, mademoiſelle! (*Aſide.*) I was going to betray myſelf!—Alas, reaſon, peace, and happineſs, all are loſt to me! [*He goes out haſtily.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

DELPHINE, *alone.*

AT length then, I have read his ſoul!—Verceil! he loved me, and ſacrificed himſelf to friendſhip! He will find in my heart the recompence due to ſo noble an effort, to ſuch an exceſs of generoſity!—Verceil! how dear he is to me!—and I am beloved by him!—this is no dream, no flattering illuſion!—Yet he went away in deſpair!—but could I undeceive him when my mother ſtill remains ignorant of my ſentiments?—Oh, ſhe will approve them I am certain! let me run and find her.——(*She advances a few ſteps.*) Here ſhe is!—but Ophemon is with her—I ſhall never dare to explain myſelf before him.

SCENE IV.

OPHEMON, MADAME DUCHEMIN, DELPHINE.

Oph. (*To madame Duchemin.*) I SEE Delphine; ſhe will let you know what my ſon could not tell us.

Mad. Duc. Verceil has juſt left you, Delphine?

Del. Yes, madam.

Mad. Duc. We met him, he ſeemed agitated, confounded; we wiſhed to queſtion him, but he ran away without anſwering us.

Del. Madam—the Marquis de Limours desired he would speak to me—

Oph. (*Aside, looking at Delphine.*) What an air of satisfaction!—(*Aloud.*) So, mademoiselle, the Marquis offers you his hand?—What answer have you given?

Del. Why—I consented to see him—he will soon be here, no doubt—

Oph. (*Aside.*) Alas, all my plans are defeated!

Del. I will answer him in your presence, madam.——I was just going in quest of you, that I might open my whole heart—

Mad. Duc. Be your inclinations what they may, my dear, I leave you at liberty to dispose of yourself; and I know you well enough to be certain that ambition alone cannot have power to determine your choice.

Del. (*Kissing her mother's hand.*) Ah, madam!—

Oph. (*Aside.*) And yet 'tis to mere ambition she sacrifices Verceil!—How excessively I have mistaken her character!

Mad. Duc. There's somebody coming—'tis the Marquis.

Del. Then you allow me to speak to him without reserve, madam?

Mad. Duc. It is what I direct, and what you ought——

Del. I will obey.

Oph. (*Aside.*) Let us see the end of all this!

SCENE V.

THE MARQUIS, OPHEMON, CLEANTHUS, MADAME DUCHEMIN, DELPHINE.

Mar. (*To Cleanthus.*) NOTWITHSTANDING the hope which has just been given me, I cannot yet approach her without trembling!

Del. (*Aside.*) I don't see Verceil!

Oph. (*To Delphine.*) Here is the Marquis—perhaps, mademoiselle, you wish to speak with him in your mother's presence only?

Del. No, sir, stay—you can neither confine, nor restrain me.

Mar. At length, mademoiselle, I am permitted—

Del. Allow me, sir, in the first place, to take the liberty of asking what you have been told?

Mar. That you were informed of my sentiments, and would condescend to see me.

Del. I thought this deference due to the honour of your intentions, sir—

Cle. (*Aside, looking at Delphine.*) Her manner is very cold and constrained!

Del. In short, I wished to convince you of my gratitude and esteem, the only sentiments you could expect from me—

Mar. And they are sufficient, provided you allow me to hope that I may hereafter inspire you with others of a more tender kind.

Del. To promise what I do not feel, would be a deception.—No, sir, although you deign to forget the great distance which separates us, I should be

be unworthy of the sacrifice you are disposed to make me, if I accepted it without having power to offer you an affection equal to your own.—What love gives, love alone can repay—and I should blush at every benefit you bestowed on me, if you did not find an ample recompence for it in my heart.

Mar. What killing words!—Oh, heaven!

Mod. Duc. (*Aside.*) My surprize is extreme!

Oph. (*Aside.*) Oh, how great was my injustice!

Cle. Delphine, perhaps too much delicacy misleads you—

Del. Ambition, no doubt, would explain itself in a different way; but I only know the language of truth and honour.

Mar. I am confounded!—So, mademoiselle—you reject my offers?

Del. They honour me, they inspire me with the liveliest gratitude; but I cannot, ought not to accept them: and depend upon it, sir, you will hereafter be thankful for my openness. Unequal marriages never terminate happily; when passion cools, the object for whose sake every thing was sacrificed, is suspected of ambition; and that horrid doubt alone may poison the purest felicity.—Then, have you not relations, who would be distracted by such a weakness? What, could I resolve to raise trouble and discord in a happy and respectable family! Could I expose myself to the malicious interpretations of the world, to that base and secret envy which unexpected good fortune always produces! Calumny would accuse me of intrigue and artifice, in short, of ensnaring you.—Oh, how can we sustain the reproach of having degraded those we love!—I should be unable to support this complication of distress, in-

juſtice, and humiliations.—Nothing diſcourages, nothing rebuffs ambition and ſelfiſhneſs; but the very ſhadow of an injurious ſurmiſe, blaſts a noble generous heart with deſpair. No, this ſplendid wretchedneſs was not deſigned for me; nay, if I could participate the ſentiments with which you honour me, ſtill, I have too much delicacy, and perhaps too much pride, for you ever to enſure the happineſs of my life.

Oph. (*Aſide.*) Oh, fortunate Verceil!

Mad. Duc. (*In a low voice to Delphine.*) Ah, Delphine! ought I ſo late to diſcover your ſecret?

Del. Alas, I never wiſhed to conceal it from you!

Mar. (*Coming to himſelf after a deep reverie.*) Aſtoniſhment—admiration—grief—doubt—a thouſand confuſed emotions of different kinds alternately agitate my boſom.—On what idea ſhould I reſt?—What ſentiment ſhould predominate?—

Oph. Eſteem and gratitude, which you cannot refuſe to ſo much nobleneſs and candour.

Mar. (*With a wild look.*) Where is Verceil?—Why did not he follow me?

Cle. He ſtayed in my apartment—

Oph. Go and ſee for him, dear Cleanthus. (*In a low voice.*) But anticipate nothing.

Cle. (*In a low voice to Ophémon.*) I underſtand.—Be eaſy. [*He goes out.*

Mar. (*With repreſſed rage.*) So, I am hated!—My offers are deſpiſed!—Friendſhip forſakes me!—I loſe every thing at once!—Oh, Delphine! you alone have power to calm the horrid agitation which diſtracts me.—If you could ſee into my ſoul, you would ſhudder at your fatal work.—This heart, though ſcorned by you, is not, perhaps,

haps, beneath your own—but it is deeply wounded!—Dread the tranſports—which reſtraint and uncertainty render ſtill more violent!—Oh, dread the penetrating eye—of love and jealouſy!

Del. What has innocence to fear?—Your injuſtice would afflict, but it could not terrify me.—Did I make any promiſe? Have I deceived you?—Of what can you complain?

Mar. How great is your aſcendency over my heart!—And ought you to preſerve it even at the time when you are robbing me of every hope?—(*To madame Duchemin.*) Oh, madam! Oh, Delphine! compaſſionate a wretch, who is, at leaſt, worthy of your concern and friendſhip—

Mad. Duc. I gueſs your ſuſpicions, and will anſwer you with frankneſs. Till now, I was unacquainted with Delphine's real ſentiments; but my eyes are opened by this converſation, and I think, with you, her heart is no longer free; however, as it was beſtowed without my conſent, you may reſt aſſured that it has not declared itſelf, and that the object of her preference is ſtill ignorant of her ſecret.

Mar. (*Oppreſſed.*) Oh, heaven!

Oph. Can an involuntary inclination excite your reſentment?

Mar. Then you know of this inclination?—Has an ungrateful, a perfidious friend, dared to intruſt you with it?

Oph. You only are ungrateful when you doubt him!——Unhappy youth! though conſumed by the moſt violent paſſion, he even denied himſelf the ſolace of communicating it to me: I found means to diſcover his ſecret, but he had the reſolution, and the virtue, to conceal it from her whom he adored.—He ſacrificed both love and

happineſs to you without a murmur—and you accuſe him! you hate him!

Mar. Could he poſſeſs ſuch an empire over himſelf?—To ſee Delphine daily, to love her and be ſilent!—If that is true, no doubt he deſerves his happineſs!—Indeed—this very afternoon he offered to go away with me, to leave Delphine!—nay oppoſed me with ſincerity!—Is it poſſible?—Delphine, I will believe no one but you.—Speak—you alone can convince me, you alone can teach me my injuſtice

Del. (*With ſweetneſs and timidity.*) Your friend never ſpoke to me, but of you.—I thought his heart poſſeſſed and engroſſed by friendſhip only—and he ſtill imagines I am attached to you.—This is the ſtrict truth.

Mar. He imagines you are attached to me!—Oh, how amply will he be recompenſed for the torments that extravagant miſtake muſt have occaſioned!—But I will talk no more of a frantick paſſion, which, henceforward, can only juſtify your hatred—

Del. My hatred!—how unwarrantable, how cruel is that expreſſion! Oh, permit me rather to indulge the hope that my friendſhip, my tender eſteem, may at length conſole you.—Renounce a weakneſs by which you are diſgraced.—The friend, once held ſo dear, has given you an example of fortitude and generoſity; dare to imitate him; by equalling his virtues you will ceaſe to hate him; and when reconciled to yourſelf, and admired by us, you will eaſily forget your ſorrows and your love.

Mar. What do I hear!—Ah, who can reſiſt you?—Yes, I will juſtify your wiſhes and your hopes.—The die is caſt, you triumph!—I pardon

Verceil his happineſs—nay, I ſhall do more—I ſhall have the courage to acquaint him with it.—Let him learn from my lips—that he is beloved, and that he ſtill preſerves his friend.

Del. Oh, ſir!——But ought I, madam——to avow—

Mad. Duc. I cannot but approve your choice, my dear, provided monſieur Ophémon would conſent—

Oph. Is it poſſible for you to doubt my anſwer and my joy?

Del. (*To the Marquis*) Well then, acquaint your friend that his love for you, and his affection for his worthy father, gave birth to the tenderneſs with which he has inſpired me. (*Preſenting her hand to the Marquis.*) And tell him likewiſe, that your extreme generoſity completes my happineſs.

Mar. Your happineſs!—it will become mine; do not doubt it!—Delphine!—You weep!—(*He throws himſelf at her feet, and ſtill graſps her hand.*) Oh, pity me no longer! you have raiſed me above myſelf!—

SCENE VI. and laſt.

MADAME DUCHEMIN, DELPHINE, THE MARQUIS, OPHEMON, CLEANTHUS, VERCEIL.

Ver. (*Perceiving the Marquis at Delphine's feet.*) WHAT do I ſee!—Ah, whither have you led me?—What barbarous tyranny prompts them to wiſh that I ſhould be a ſpectator?—Oh, let me fly!——

Mar.

Mar. (*Rising, and turning to stop him.*) Stay, Verceil!—

Ver. In vain you wish to detain me!—I must bid you an eternal farewell.—At last know all I have suffered.—Cease to impede my flight.—In me, behold your rival!—

Mar. (*Embracing him.*) And in me, behold your friend: learn your happiness from me; Delphine is your own!——

Ver. Kind heaven!

Mar. She loves you!—Be happy, you deserve it, and let the hand of friendship unite you!

Ver. Delphine!——My friend!—is this possible?—

Cle. What a delightful change!

Oph. Oh, Verceil, all my prayers are granted!

Ver. And you consent!—and Delphine!—No, I am deceived, imposed upon!——Ah, my father!—

Mad. Duc. Speak, Delphine!

Del. (*To Verceil.*) When generous friendship has condescended to be my interpreter, can a doubt remain?—

Ver. You love me, Delphine!—Delphine is mine!—But, alas!——my dear, my too feeling friend—what will become of you?—Oh, I dare not give way to my transports!——You are wretched, and my happiness seems a crime!—What, have the torments I so lately felt transfused themselves into your bosom?——That thought distracts me, and poisons all my joy!—

Mar. Is my lot to be lamented, when I preserve a friend like you, and obtain Delphine's esteem? The more painful the sacrifice I make, the more satisfaction I ought to feel, and the more to glory in it! Oh, Verceil, you have too

much greatneſs of mind to be ſurprized at the empire of reaſon, or to pity a heart which triumphs over itſelf!—Delphine, Vercei, dear objects of every affection of my ſoul, be happy, and, by your means, I ſhall be happy too!—I have loſt the tranſient illuſions of love, but friendſhip ſtill remains, and I have recovered virtue—theſe are the real ſources of peace and happineſs!

[The curtain drops.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST VOLUME.

ERRATA.

Vol. IV.

Page 121 l. 11 *for* iu, *read* in
—— 128 l. 28 *after* wit, *add* an interrogation point.
—— 137 l. 8 for *te*, read *to*.

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